



UNIVERSITY  
OF PITTSBURGH



Dar. Rm.  
HF5386  
Y6

LIBRARIES

al

89-

252  
843  
8  
218





W. H. Lupton &

Ans. 1000.00  
— — — — —  
5.00



JOHN HANCOCK  
THE PATRIOT MERCHANT.

THE  
YOUNG  
MECHANIC



BOSTON  
GEORGE W. LIGHT.



THE  
YOUNG MERCHANT.

All honest, open, honourable gains,  
Fair legal interest, bonds and mortgages,  
Ships to the East and West.—*Southey.*

—————Affect  
In honour honesty.—*Shakspeare.*

There is no time so miserable, but a man may be true.—*Id.*

Second Stereotype Edition.

BOSTON:  
GEORGE W. LIGHT, 1 CORNHILL.  
1841.

---

Entered, according to the act of Congress, in the year 1839, by

R. W. POMEROY,

in the clerk's office of the district court of the eastern district  
of Pennsylvania.

---

## PREFACE.

THE development of the plan pursued in the following work is so fully made out in the Introduction, that but little is required to be said in the way of preface. One point, however, it may be well enough to clear up in the outset. It is this: the term **MERCHANT** is employed in these pages in rather a more comprehensive sense, than that to which it is generally limited. It is intended to embrace all who are employed in trade and business,—buying and selling. To an explanation and illustration of the qualifications, training, duties, dangers, pleasures, and rewards of this numerous and useful class of citizens, the work is devoted. To just so much of their favour is it now respectfully commended, as it shall be found to deserve by the soundness of its principles and the practical utility of its precepts.





# CONTENTS.

---

INTRODUCTION .....	Page 9
INTELLECTUAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE MERCHANT ..	16
MORAL QUALIFICATIONS, MANNERS AND ADDRESS ...	36
Honesty .....	36
Candour .....	37
Firmness .....	38
Prudence .....	39
Truth .....	39
Justice .....	48
Economy .....	51
Temperance .....	57
Liberality .....	58
A few Shillings well laid out .....	61
Politeness .....	69
Good Temper .....	72
Perseverance .....	74
Nil Desperandum .....	77
EDUCATION SUITABLE FOR THE MERCHANT .....	85
CONDUCT DURING APPRENTICESHIP .....	94
The true policy of a Clerk .....	94
Clubs .....	96
Trusts .....	98
Savings .....	99
Companions .....	101
Leisure Hours .....	102

**HINTS TO THE YOUNG MERCHANT UPON SETTING UP IN**

BUSINESS .....	104
Order and Method .....	109
Arrangement of Time .....	110
Arrangement of Money disbursements .....	114
Domestic Arrangements .....	116
Choice of a Partner .....	118
Character the chief element of Credit .....	118
Self-discipline .....	119

**ON CERTAIN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF COMMERCE .** 122

Accumulation .....	122
Property .....	126
Capital .....	129
Credit .....	147
Profits of Trade .....	149
On Speculation .....	157

**THE MERCHANT'S DUTIES .....** 164

Purposes of Commerce .....	164
Unlawful Traffic .....	165
Competition .....	166
Regulation of Profits .....	167
Combinations .....	173
Reducing Prices .....	175
Probity .....	178
Frugality in Personal and Domestic Expenses ...	183
Fidelity to Verbal Engagements .....	186
Fairness and Openness of Dealing .....	186
Transactions with the Legislature .....	188
Commercial Credit .....	189
Degrees of Credit .....	193
Foundations of Credit .....	193
Punctuality .....	195

<b>The Merchant's Accounts</b> .....	196
<b>Duty of the Insolvent Merchant</b> .....	198
<b>Duty of cultivating the Mind</b> .....	200
<b>Duty of Self-control</b> .....	202
<b>Observation of the Sabbath</b> .....	204
<b>Partnership</b> .....	204
<b>Influence of the Merchant's Example</b> .....	205
<b>False Pretences with respect to Property</b> .....	207
<b>Character for Prudence</b> .....	208
<b>Nature of Paper Credit</b> .....	210
<b>Duty of the Merchant and Bank with respect to Paper Credit</b> .....	212
<b>Peculiar Duties of the Bank Director</b> .....	218
<b>Duty of the Merchant towards beginners in trade</b>	221
<b>Duty of the Merchant towards the Mercantile Community</b> .....	222
<b>Duty of the Merchant towards Clerks and De- pendants</b> .....	223
<b>Duty of Insurance against Losses by Fire and by Sea</b> .....	224
<b>Extortion</b> .....	225
<b>Smuggling</b> .....	226
<b>Creating artificial Prices</b> .....	227
<b>Duty of the Merchant towards Sailors</b> .....	228
<b>Peculiar Duties of an Agent or Commission Mer- chant</b> .....	229
<b>THE MERCHANT'S CONDUCT UNDER REVERSES</b> .....	232
<b>THE MERCHANT'S RECREATIONS</b> .....	240
<b>THE MERCHANT'S REWARDS</b> .....	279
<b>The Philosopher and the Merchant</b> .....	283



## INTRODUCTION.

---

*“I will be a Merchant ; because that is the readiest way to make a fortune.”* So says many a youth, when he first sets his foot in a store or counting-room, for the purpose of commencing his duties as a clerk. But he should remember, that, like other questions of expediency, this, respecting the proper choice of a profession, has two sides to it. “Much may be said on both sides ;” as Sir Roger de Coverley sagely remarks. It is by no means a settled point, that it is always a desirable thing for a young man to make his fortune very rapidly ; and, even if this were admitted, it is far from being certain that trade is the shortest, still less the surest, way of amassing wealth at an early period of life.

We would by no means damp the ardour, or paralyse the energy of the merchant, by disparaging his occupation. It is a noble and elevated one, as we shall hereafter have occasion to show. It has produced some of the most illustrious cha-

racters in history ; and still occupies some of the best talent in the world. But we would endeavour to prevent our youthful aspirant from entering upon the business of life with erroneous views respecting its proper objects, and its true happiness.

Commerce is not the surest road to wealth, or even to competence. If its statistics for the United States were sufficiently full to enable us to present the reader with a complete list of all who have been engaged in it during the last thirty years, we firmly believe, it would be found, that where one has realized a fortune by it, ten have failed, and brought losses upon those connected with them in the relations of business. Convinced as we are, that this result has arisen chiefly from young men entering upon the business of trade with wrong views, and that much of the suffering and misfortune which it has occasioned might have been averted by the more general dissemination of correct principles among this honourable and useful class of citizens, we feel encouraged and stimulated, in our present design of supplying some part of the deficiency, by offering a few hints for the consideration of the  
**YOUNG MERCHANT.**

Commerce, if pursued with correct views and just intentions, is as ready a mode of securing

competence for the decline of life as any other. But it is attended with many and great risks; and perhaps our reader will give us more heedful attention, if we say what we believe to be the sober truth, that these risks arise chiefly from the character of those who make commerce their pursuit. The ship may arrive, after weathering many a storm, or her loss may be remedied by insurance; bad debts may be finally recovered, by patience and perseverance; even the entire loss of capital may be made up by industry and integrity; but gross defects in character, and false principles of business, are sure to terminate in a very different result from that of the acquisition of respectability and wealth.

But wealth alone is not the main and proper object of any profession. It is not, and should never be considered, the chief pursuit of life. A profession which furnishes employment and support, and affords the means of mental tranquillity and true honest independence, even if it should not lead to the acquisition of considerable wealth, is preferable, both for time and eternity, to that which sacrifices ease of mind, domestic happiness, or the slightest point of integrity, to the acquisition of millions.

*“I will be a Merchant; because the Merchant leads an easy life.”* This is another of

the fallacious views with which too frequently the youth embraces commerce as a profession. If he supposes that the merchant may lead an indolent life and prosper, he is mistaken. If he supposes that there is not necessarily in this occupation a call for the exertion of a man's best energies of mind and body, he is under a gross delusion. If he supposes that the merchant must not exert himself exclusively and to the full in his business, as far as is consistent with his duties as a man and a Christian, in order to insure success, he has formed a very incorrect idea of the nature of this honourable and arduous pursuit.

We recommend commerce as a pursuit; but not as an easy, indolent, leisurely pursuit. That, indeed, would be no recommendation for a profession in which a son of ours was to engage. Commerce is an active and laborious occupation. We would not have it otherwise. We would not commend it on any other terms. "Life," says a shrewd observer of men and things, "life, without some necessity for exertion, must ever lack real interest. That state is capable of the greatest enjoyment, where necessity urges, but not painfully; where effort is required, but as much as possible without anxiety; where the spring and summer of life are preparatory to the har-



vest of autumn, and the repose of winter. Then is every season sweet, and, in a well-spent life, the last the best—the season of calm enjoyment, the richest in recollections, the brightest in hope. *Good training, and a fair start, constitute a more desirable patrimony than wealth;* and those parents who study their children's welfare rather than the gratification of their own avarice and vanity, would do well to think of this. Is it better to run a successful race, or to begin and end at the goal?"

*"I will be a Merchant; because his is an elegant and genteel profession."* We will not say that this is a fallacy, but we must endeavour to correct the views with which this opinion is generally uttered. The merchant's is a genteel and elegant profession, because it is consistent with the true character of a gentleman, and it admits of the indulgence of elegant and intellectual tastes. But neither this, nor any other profession, in our free country, is elegant and genteel enough to confer respectability on any man who is not entitled to the respect of society by his own intrinsic merit. Among us, in these United States, there is no prescriptive gentility. The only way to be *considered* a gentleman, is to *be* a gentleman. The only nobility here is the nobility of character and

talent ; and, thanks to the virtue and foresight of our ancestors, a man in the humblest walk of life, may gain more real respect from the community in which he lives, and more marks of public confidence and esteem, too, than an individual who disgraces the highest station by vice or mere vacuity.

Let no young man become a merchant, under the false idea that the respectability of the pursuit will make up for a single deficiency or vice in his character. His situation as a merchant is conspicuous, it is true ; but this circumstance will only render his vices or follies so much the more conspicuous and disgraceful, and their consequences so much the more irremediable. If you are conscious of base motives and darling weaknesses, which you are resolved not to abandon, be any thing but a merchant. Disgrace some more ignoble pursuit, and leave the honourable career of commerce to better men.

Having offered these cautionary hints to the youth who proposes to learn the business of a merchant, we will now proceed to consider the intellectual and moral qualifications, and the education which we deem essential to success in the pursuits of commerce. We shall subsequently offer some hints for the special benefit of the young man during his apprenticeship, and

some advice on the views and motives which should influence him at the time of "setting up in business" for himself. We shall afterwards have some remarks to offer on the principles of commerce, the merchant's duties, the merchant's conduct under reverses, his recreations in prosperity, and his rewards and encouragements in all circumstances. These will be the principal topics of the present work; and they will lead to the discussion of others incidentally connected with them, which will be pursued at intervals, as they appear likely to interest or benefit the reader.

INTELLECTUAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE  
MERCHANT.

“HAS he a talent for business?” is usually the first inquiry of those who would learn the intellectual qualifications of an individual destined for commercial pursuits. In endeavouring to determine in what this peculiar talent consists, we shall not adopt the language of the metaphysicians, nor that of the phrenologists, but will content ourselves with the use of such terms as may be equally intelligible to all readers.

Perhaps we may as well begin by enumerating some of the mental qualities which we would *not* require, before proceeding to those which we deem essential. In the first place, we would not require a merchant to possess a brilliant imagination, a bold and discursive fancy, or a turn for abstruse speculation in science. We would not require him to be an acute and profound reasoner, or a lively wit; nor would we insist upon a great capacity for languages or mechanical invention. These are more useful in other professions, and, if attended with the dispositions and habits which usually accompany them, form so many disqualifications for business, since they

naturally withdraw the mind in a great measure from its pursuit.

On the other hand, we would choose to have our young merchant endowed with a talent and habit of *observation*, and a disposition to make himself acquainted with the characters of men and the properties of things. We would wish him to possess *strong powers of perception*, qualifying him to observe and compare carefully the qualities of all the objects of traffic ; and a certain *patience of investigation*, which should never suffer him to be content with a superficial notice of such things as come within the range of his business, but would generally lead him to examine a subject so long as there was any thing to be learnt respecting it. We would wish him to be possessed of that union of quick perception and steadiness of nerve which is so happily denominated *presence of mind* ; so that he might not be easily thrown off his guard, or misled by those whose intention is to deceive and overreach. At the same time, we would wish him to possess powers of *judgment and reflection*, which would enable him to compare the professions of men with their actions and apparent dispositions, in order to form a correct estimate of the character, as well as to determine the probabilities of

success in any mercantile undertaking necessarily attended with contingencies and risks.

The power of understanding men's characters, can hardly be considered an intuitive one, although it is sometimes called so. It depends much upon judgment and reflection; although these mental operations may sometimes be performed with great rapidity. Whatever it may depend upon, it is certain that this ready appreciation of the characters of those with whom he deals, is often of great importance in guarding the merchant against imposition, as well as in preventing him from forming injudicious mercantile connexions.

To the talent of observation, we would wish our young merchant to add a certain *regulating power of the mind, which fits him for the preservation of order and method* in every thing that relates to his business. By some persons, this will be considered a matter of habit rather than a natural gift. Possibly it may be so, although we think otherwise. But, if there is no natural gift of *order*, there certainly seems to be one of *disorder*, if we may judge from the incorrigible propensity which some young clerks have for throwing every thing into confusion which is confided to their care. It is the opposite of this which we would see possessed and cultivated by

those who hope to succeed in business. The concerns of a mercantile firm are necessarily so delicate and complicated, that, like the machinery of a great factory, they cannot be successfully conducted without strict order and method. Some men, it is true, blunder into fortunes, and others find bags of gold ; but their success will not serve as the basis of a general rule. We must, therefore, insist on a talent or a habit, whichever you please, of order.

We would prefer, although this is not absolutely essential, that there should be a *natural aptitude for calculation* ; in other words, that our merchant should be “quick at figures.” A certain amount of arithmetical information he must possess. If he is also prompt in calculation, this talent will be very serviceable in certain emergencies which may present themselves to any one concerned in the multifarious transactions of commerce.

The power of commanding and concentrating the attention on a single object, in the midst of bustle and business—ABSTRACTION, perhaps, it might be termed, with reference to surrounding objects, should be possessed by the merchant to a certain degree. The uses of this power are obvious enough in an occupation where it is frequently requisite to carry on calculations, or

write letters, bills, or invoices, in situations where a person whose mind is not completely under his control, in this respect, would find it impossible to go on without frequent errors.

A good *memory* is of great importance in all the transactions of business, although it is considered improper to trust to the keeping of memory alone any of those matters which merchants generally commit to writing. This faculty of the mind is greatly strengthened by exercise, and by habits of close attention; and it is aided by the observance of order and method.

The crowning talent of all is a well-regulated and steady *activity of mind*, which renders one impatient of idleness, and always anxious to be engaged in some useful occupation. Mere vacuity is one of the greatest enemies of real enjoyment; and the man who has learnt to derive a positive gratification from the calm and steady exercise of his best talents and capacities, has learnt the true secret of happiness.

No amount of mere talents is sufficient to secure success in any career of honour and usefulness, without those moral qualifications which form the proper basis of character. The former are the sails of the ship, while the latter constitute the ballast, preserving her equilibrium, and enabling her to maintain her course amidst the



head-winds and tempests which she is destined to encounter.

STEADY, is an old-fashioned word in its application to character. Formerly, when a clerk was offered or advertised for, *steadiness* was the invariable requisition. Now-a-days, it is a "*smart active young man*," that is *wanted*. We like the old word best. It implies much. It gives assurance that whatever talents a young man may possess, whether great or small, he has placed them under the control of a guiding moral principle; and that, if the vessel may not make sail at the rate of ten knots an hour, she has at least ballast enough not to be capsized by the first squall that may ruffle the waves on her track.

We are more than half inclined to tell, or rather to quote a story, to illustrate the position that a steady and determined application, even of the humblest faculty or trade, may be attended with permanent success and enjoyment, when the possession of the most brilliant talents fails to insure either. We quote our story the more readily, because we are conscious that some of the best practical precepts in our own possession have been firmly impressed upon our minds by the forcible illustrations of fiction.

"The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,  
Conveys the moral counsel in a tale."

Indeed, in order to relieve our reader from the effort attendant on the perusal of a continued series of preceptive remarks, we may find frequent occasion to enliven our pages with an anecdote or story. The first we offer is the oriental tale of "*Osman and Zambri, or the Receipt for making Sherbet.*"

‘A good old Persian, having reached the end of a long and blameless life, experienced in his last moments intense anxiety about the destiny of his two sons, whom he left without fortune, trade, or protection. The eldest, who was twenty years of age, was named Osman; the other was two years younger, and bore the name of Zambri.

The last moments of the old man at length drew nigh, and as he was thinking less of his own sufferings than of the fate betiding his children, his ear was agreeably roused by the accents of a soft, melodious voice, that said to him, “Fear nothing, good old man, I will watch over thy children; die in peace, as thou hast lived. I bring a present to each of thy sons; let them make a good use of it; one day, perhaps, they will meet each other again, and live in happiness.” At these words a balsamic odour was diffused through the apartment, and a brilliant light, soft as a moon-beam, showed to the old man the features of a

youth, whose physiognomy had something celestial. It was a beneficent genius, who, having deposited his gifts on the couch of the dying man, disappeared with the rapidity of lightning.

The old Persian summoned his two sons to his bed-side ; they came, hastily lighted a small lamp, and, approaching their father, heard the account of the vision with which he had just been honoured, and were shown the presents of the genius. On one side was a little box, covered with glittering spangles ; on the other, a leaf of paper, carefully sealed. "Come, Osman, you are the eldest," said the father ; "it is for you to choose."

Osman, enticed by the lustre of the box, eagerly seized it, and poor Zambri was obliged to be satisfied with the humble sheet of paper. The old man embraced and blessed his sons, and died like one who sleeps in the arms of hope.

Having sincerely bewailed the loss of so kind a father, and having paid him the duties of an honourable sepulture, the two brothers were anxious to learn what assistance they might hope to derive from the presents of the Genius. Osman opened his little box, and found it filled with lozenges of different forms and colours. He was tempted to laugh at so miserable a donation, when he perceived these words written round the lid of the box:—*Every time thou shalt eat one of these*

*lozenges, thy imagination shall produce a poem, perfect as a whole, and sublime or elegant in its details ; such, in short, as shall surpass the works of the best poet of Persia.*

Osman was not wanting in vanity ; the possession of so splendid a secret completely turned his head ; myriads of illusions of glory and fortune overpowered him at once.

From the worth of the present the Genius had made to his brother, Zambri doubted not that his paper contained likewise some marvellous secret. He opened it, and read with surprise, not unmingled with grief—*New receipt for making sherbet.* A few lines only indicated the method of composing a liquor, of which a single drop in a bowl of sherbet would impart to it a flavour and perfume, until then unknown to the most luxurious Asiatics.

Osman was overjoyed, but Zambri was quite in despair. Osman did not wish to quit his brother, but the command of the Genius on this point was positive ; so the two brothers affectionately embraced each other, and, shedding a few tears, separated. The elder took the road to Bagdad, where all the literati and poets of Asia were assembled to embellish the court of the Caliph. As to poor Zambri, he departed from the humble cottage of his father, taking with him

only the poor *receipt for making sherbet* ; leaving the direction of his path to chance, which often guides us as effectually as prudence.

Before his arrival at Bagdad, Osman had already eaten half-a-dozen lozenges, and consequently had produced half-a-dozen poems, before which the productions of the greatest oriental poets grew dim and insipid. But he soon learnt, it is not talent that leads to fortune, but patronage. He felt the necessity of connecting himself with men of letters and of the world ; but he saw only men preoccupied with their own concerns, their pleasure, or their pretensions. Under what title should he present himself ? Under that of a poet ? The palace and the city were overflowing with them ; every avenue to fame was already choked up. To consult his colleagues was to advise with his rivals ; to ask praise of them, was to ask a miser for the key of his money chest. The critics were afraid to be the first to applaud, lest they should compromise their reputation. The men of the world waited for the decision of the critics, and the ignorant fancied they gave more peculiar evidence of discernment and delicacy by contempt than approbation. Besides, so many new books were constantly appearing, that scarcely anything was read. Notwithstanding all this, the works of Osman found a pub-

lisher ; but they were scarcely even noticed amidst the multitude of productions of the same sort.

Having existed for four or five years at Bagdad, without obtaining more than a whispered encouragement from some wise men, who were without credit, precisely because they were wise, poor Osman began to lose the brilliant hopes that had formerly dazzled him. Nevertheless, by dint of eating lozenges, he did at length attract some attention. If genius require a time to emerge from obscurity, scarcely is it known than it is repaid for that early injustice : it is run after, not for its own sake, but from vanity ; envy will likewise sometimes seize upon it, as an instrument that may possibly serve its purposes. At length, however, nothing was talked of but the writings of Osman ; they were read with avidity, and compared with those of esteemed poets, not to heighten Osman, but to humble men whose fame became importunate. At length, poor Osman, after languishing so long in oblivion, suddenly saw himself on a pinnacle, without having passed through the intermediate degrees between wretchedness and prosperity, obscurity and renown.

The Caliph desired to see so great a genius ; he was anxious to ornament his court with him. Osman was cumbered with honours ; he sang the praise of the Caliph with a refinement far beyond

the power of other poets to imitate ; and the Caliph delighted in this refined praise so much the more, as it was food not often to be met with at court.

So much merit, and such surpassing happiness in particular, soon excited the jealousy of the other poets and courtiers. Those even who had avowed themselves the most enthusiastic admirers of Osman, fearing to be eclipsed by this new comer, resolved to overthrow the idol they had raised to a higher eminence than they had desired.

One of these poets, an enemy to Osman, was commissioned to compose a satire against the Caliph, and it was concerted for this production to be secretly circulated in the name of the favourite. From this moment the avenger of the common cause haunted Osman's footsteps like a shadow, incessantly bepraising and extolling him.

It chanced that as Osman, on some occasion, *improvised* a new poem before the Caliph, his rival, having given him an animated applause, accidentally cast his eyes to the ground, and saw one of the little glittering lozenges of Osman, who, carried away by the impetuosity of declamation, had chanced to let it drop on the carpet. The traitor picked it up, and mechanically put it to his mouth.

The lozenge produced its effect ; the poet felt a

sudden inspiration, and straightway retiring from the hall of audience, composed the projected satire. He was himself surprised at the wealth of his own imagination ; the lines ready pointed flowed from his pen without effort ; the most stinging expressions rose unsought to his invocation ; in an instant, as it were, he had completed a masterpiece of true malignity.

He remained a few seconds, entranced in ecstasy at his own performance ; then carried it in triumph to his friends, or rather, his accomplices. The satire was received with shouts of applause : it was in the pure and energetic style of Osman. His hand-writing was imitated ; and the libel was immediately circulated under his name.

Murmurs were heard in every direction against the ingratitude of Osman. The satire fell into the hands of the Caliph, who, in the indignation of wounded self-esteem, ordered the unfortunate Osman to be stripped of his possessions, clothed in the rags and tatters of poverty, and forthwith ignominiously driven out from Bagdad. Osman, overwhelmed by this unforeseen blow, could not even find language to defend himself with. How indeed could the voice of his innocence have been heard above the roar of calumny ?

Having wandered long, hither and thither, as chance directed him, imploring pity, sometimes



received benevolently, but oftener selfishly repulsed, he arrived at nightfall at a beautiful country mansion magnificently illuminated. Here he heard the voice of joy blended with the brilliant tones of a multitude of instruments, and saw on every side preparations for a splendid entertainment. Meantime the thunder began to growl, the heavens darkened beneath a dense canopy of clouds, and the tattered garments of Osman were soon drenched with rain.

He approached the beautiful dwelling, in hope to find there, if not hospitality for the night, at least a shelter from the passing tempest. The slaves who perceived him, advanced and asked harshly what he wanted. "A humble shelter from the storm, a morsel of bread to appease my hunger, and a handful of straw whereon to rest my wearied limbs."—"There is nothing here for you."—"For pity's sake." "Retire."—"See how it rains!—hear the thunder!" "Go and anchor elsewhere, but do not come to disturb with thy presence the festivities of our master."

Osman was obeying this rigorous order when the master of the house, who from the window had witnessed the whole scene, descended, summoned his slaves, and ordered them to take the unfortunate in, to give him clothing, a bed, and all he could stand in need of. "Woe!" said he,

“woe be to the man who, in the midst of his enjoyment, can suffer the poor to approach and implore in vain ! Woe to the rich man, who surfeited with his choice viands refuses a morsel of bread to a brother in distress ! Poor traveller ! go and repose thyself, and may the Prophet shed on thee a gentle sleep, in which thou mayst, if only for a moment, lose the remembrance of thy misfortunes !” “Heavens !” exclaimed Osman, “what voice do I hear ! it is the voice of *Zambri* !”—“*Zambri* !” returned the other, “what ! you know him then ?”—“Do I know him ? indeed, do I know my own brother !”—“You my brother !” exclaimed *Zambri* in his turn, surprised, “can it be true ?—The voice—the features, though changed by grief and misery—ah ! I remember them all ! we meet again, my dear Osman !”—He could say no more : overcome with emotion, he essayed affectionately to embrace his brother, but Osman, subdued by excess of joy, had fallen senseless at his feet.

Osman was carried into the handsomest apartment in the house ; every attention was lavished upon him, and in a short time he was restored to consciousness. *Zambri* gave him a magnificent change of dress ; and taking him by the hand, led him into the festive hall, and introduced him to his friends. After the banquet, Osman related

the vicissitudes of his fortune, his long misery, his rapid rise to eminence, the jealousy and perfidy of his enemies. "But thou," he added, "my dear Zambri, by what happy chance do I meet thee here? and this beautiful house, these numerous domestics, this sumptuous furniture, thou owest ——" "*To the receipt for making sherbet,*" said Zambri, smiling. "Listen to my story; it is a very simple one. Immediately on leaving you, I directed my steps towards Teflis; all I sought, was my daily bread. On my arrival, I presented myself in the public squares frequented by the rich men, who resort thither to take ice and sherbet. I asked employment of the master of a divan, who harshly repulsed me: he is not the first person who has shut his door against his fortune.

"I presented myself at several other houses in rotation, and experienced the same reception. Not knowing what to do, and being without money wherewith to subsist, I at length repaired to the obscure coffee-houses frequented by the humbler classes of society. I solicited employment, and a man named Mehdad, the owner of a miserable looking place, agreed to accept my services. I prepared a bottle of sherbet from the receipt of the beneficent Genius, but the ingredients of which, though very simple, I had till then been without,

and in a short time the door of the coffee-house of Mehdad was constantly crowded : persons of distinction would drink no other than Mehdad's sherbet, and he prospered so much in his business, that he began to accumulate a fortune.

“ He had an only child, a daughter ; she was handsome, and was young ; she pleased my fancy, and I solicited her hand. I had not divulged the secret of the receipt ; Mehdad, ignorant that he was indebted to me for his fortune, was persuaded that he owed it solely to his own ability. He contemptuously rejected my proposal, and dismissed me from his house. Poor man ! he is not the first who has, unknown to himself, shut his door against his own good fortune.

“ I had gained some money in his service, and made use of my economical savings to form, on my own account, an establishment in one of the public gardens of Teflis, on the delightful banks of the river Khur. I built a little booth in an elegant and simple style ; there I sold my sherbet to those who visited the gardens. In a short time Mehdad and all the coffee-houses in Teflis, were deserted for my little tent. Nothing was talked of but the sherbet of Zambri ; it was cried up in every circle, and introduced at every festivity. The garden of Zambri was thronged with company from the rising to the going down of the

sun. The multitude gathered round my tent like swarms of flies around a drop of honey. I was obliged to erect a tent ten times larger than the first, and I ornamented it in a magnificent style.

“In less than a year I had already acquired a considerable fortune. I gave up my new establishment, and settled in the city, where I sold merchandise of all sorts. I prepared large quantities of this beneficent liquor, to which I was indebted for my wealth. I sent it to every city of Persia, and even exported it to remotest countries. Heaven seemed to prosper all my undertakings. A beautiful young woman, twenty years of age, the widow of a rich merchant, saw and loved me. I was not insensible to her charms, and my felicity was increased by one of the happiest of marriages.

“We have made the acquisition of this delightful dwelling; we live here in the pleasantest months of the year, with our true friends, who, by sharing our pleasures, add a new lustre to them.

“How many times, dear Osman, have my thoughts been occupied with thee? Often in the midst of my prosperity have I said to myself—‘What is my brother doing? On what spot does Osman reside? Doubtless the splendid secret he is possessor of, must already have procured him

an immense fortune, and have raised him to great honour.' But I have learnt indeed to-day, that for a happy and peaceful life, and even for a substantially prosperous one, the humblest trade is more certain than brilliant talent. It is not that in the way of business I have experienced no vexations. I have had my enviers, but have been able to silence them. Sometimes my sherbet has been counterfeited; but the fraud has always been discovered, and the intrigues of my rivals have but served to increase my renown. I have found out in my day, that the palate of men is easier to satisfy than their imagination, and that those who cannot agree about the merit of a good book, will more easily decide together upon the flavour of anything to eat or drink."

So said honest Zambri. He did every thing affection could devise for the consolation of Osman. The two brothers were not again separated; and thanks to the *Receipt for making Sherbet*, continued long to enjoy the varied pleasures of wealth, and the more real and durable pleasures of a quiet spirit and a friendly disposition.'

The reader should not permit himself to forget the incidents of this story until he has made what the divines call an *application* of the subject. It

contains many excellent moralities, if one would but take the trouble to find them out. For example, we should not fail to notice that the worthy man, Zambri, was not *above his business*, humble as it was. He is not even represented as having "retired," after amassing great wealth.

Again, Zambri made his fortune by the use of a talent or rather secret, which he despised at the outset of his career, before he had been compelled to put its value to the test. This has been the case with others. Many a rich old trader attributes the acquisition of his wealth to the working up of some hint, the following out of some sound project, to which at first he attached no importance, and of which the true value was only learned by experiment.

Again, it was by producing an article of necessity and daily consumption, and that of a very superior quality, that Zambri gained so much wealth and distinction; and hence we may infer that as a general rule, it is better to deal in articles of daily use than in matters of mere luxury and fancy.

Once more, Zambri was not puffed up by prosperity, but humbly attributed all his success to the favour of Providence; and with this remark, we will take leave of Osman and Zambri, and proceed to the next head of our subject

MORAL QUALIFICATIONS, MANNERS AND  
ADDRESS.

## HONESTY.

AT the head of the moral qualifications of the merchant, every one will concur in placing HONESTY — old-fashioned, unflinching, uncompromising honesty ; not the half-way honesty which is ready to give into every questionable principle and practice that claims for its justification the supposed *custom of trade*, which quiets a clamorous conscience by quoting the practice of this or that competitor in the same business ; but which sits calmly and impartially in judgment on every proposed measure or practice, and pronounces upon it according to the immutable principles of right and wrong.

There never was a truer or a wiser maxim than that “Honesty is the best policy.” It is especially so for the merchant, whose character and credit will not bear the least stain, or suspicion of a stain. When, therefore, the young merchant is tempted to do what he knows is not honest and honourable in the strictest sense, by the example of those who may seem even to stand high in the world’s estimation, let him remember that the pecuniary loss which he may sustain by preserving his integrity, will be amply



compensated not only by the preservation of his own self-respect, but by the acquisition of a high character among mercantile men, which is the best and most important element of credit, and which can only result from a uniform observance of the strictest laws of integrity. We shall return to this subject under the head of "The Merchant's Duties."

## CANDOUR.

Akin to honesty is *candour*. It is to this quality, people refer when they speak of an individual as a *fair man*. They mean by this, a man who is above petty tricks and artifices; who, without unnecessarily divulging matters of private concern, or violating confidence reposed in him, is yet superior to the meanness of concealing from those with whom he deals, what they are justly entitled to know; who scorns every thing like "humbug" and imposture in trade. Such a character is not only honourable in itself, but it is calculated to make the strongest and most favourable impression on men of plain common sense, and even to command the respect of those who possess no such virtue themselves. There is a sort of *plausibility* which is the counterfeit of candour, and which some traders adopt for the special benefit of their country customers.

But it never fails to be detected in the long run ; and many a dishonourable but plausible man is seen through at the very moment when he thinks he is playing off some capital and gainful imposture.

#### FIRMNESS.

Another quality which we place high in the scale of mercantile virtues, is **FIRMNESS**. How often has a man been ruined, both in fortune and character, by not possessing firmness enough to say “No !” when prudence and integrity required him to do so ! The merchant, more than any other, seems to have occasion for this virtue of firmness. Almost every day of his life, he is under the necessity of giving a firm but polite refusal to some request which the person who prefers it thinks very reasonable and proper. He should therefore learn how to perform this necessary duty with the best grace, and without wounding the feelings of those whom he refuses to favour ; and above all things, he should be careful never to place himself under such obligations, or to form such strict connexions with another, as to deprive himself of the power of saying to him, “No,” whenever his own honour or safety may render such a proceeding necessary.

To resist the seductions of a certain fashion or *esprit du corps*, which sometimes infects the

mercantile class, requires no small degree of firmness, especially when speculation and wild adventure become the fashion of the day. But those are the times that try men's souls. Then it is that the weak fall and the strong survive; as those who calmly survey the wrecks of some late storms of adversity may feelingly testify. To firmness, the merchant should add prudence.

#### PRUDENCE.

This quality is necessary in every part of the merchant's career;—in his intercourse with men on the Exchange or in the warehouse, and in the calculations of probable loss and gain which he makes, pencil in hand, in the solitude of his own chamber. Imagination and hope are great cheats, and require the constant oversight of prudence and firmness. In choosing a partner in business, the whole success of the connexion depends on the prudence of the choice; and in regulating expenses and outlays, every thing depends on the exercise of this quality. Under the head of "Economy," we shall present a few more remarks directed to this point.

#### TRUTH.

Truth is the basis of all virtue. No character can be deemed honourable, or even respect-

able, in which truth does not form, or is not supposed to form a part. Thus necessary to the good repute of the world, it is equally essential to ensure us our own respect, and protect our own happiness. It is strange that the definition of a quality so eminently valuable should be so loose and vague; and, that while all men so energetically announce their veneration for truth, so many are perpetually violating her laws. The fact is, that the latter is the natural consequence of the former error. We do not form a sufficiently precise notion of the nature of truth. We allow that it is, to speak of things as they are, or have been; but at the same time that we make this acknowledgment, we indulge in certain additions, omissions, and alterations, which, though trivial, and made without any intention of deception, do often most materially change the character of the things or events we describe, and leave an impression on the hearer, very different from what the ungarbled fact would have done. We are often aware that we have done so; nay, when speaking under the influence of prejudice, we feel at the time that we are doing so; yet boldly pursue our narrative, and should be both surprised and offended at its close, if our auditors were to question the precision of our description. How boundless would be our indigna-

tion were they to pronounce us falsifiers! we should most probably, though self-convicted, add a fresh falsehood to those already carelessly incurred, by asserting our accuracy. This detail may at first sight appear incompatible with the apparent frankness and truth of general conversation; but if we very closely investigate the description of circumstances, the repetition of speeches, the delineation of objects, given in common chit-chat, we shall find abundant proof of the carelessness, to say no worse, of general speakers.

The universality of such practices may perhaps be urged as an excuse for their admission; and because every body takes the liberty of deviating from correctness, it may be argued that such innovations are always supposed, and therefore do not produce the effect of falsehood,—deception. Even were this true, we do not see, because error is universal, that it therefore ceases to be error, or that custom can authorize it, and make wrong, right. But do we not deceive ourselves in denominating all such license of speech, innocent and harmless? In our opinion, the very reverse is the fact, and it is our strong conviction of the unlimited mischiefs caused by inaccurate representation that has urged us to enter very fully on the subject.

We can scarcely look into any social or domestic circle, but we find some coldness or dissensions subsisting among some of its members. We will be bold to say, that in nine cases out of ten, such coldness, and such dissension, have arisen from false representations of the words and actions of the parties, acquired through some mutual friend or acquaintance. We do not mean to say, that such misrepresentations have been always intentionally caused, for we believe them most generally to originate from those habits of lax and thoughtless relation into which many people allow themselves to fall. It seems particularly vexatious, that the general respect paid to truth, should in part cause this mischief; and yet so it is, for we appear implicitly to rely upon the accounts given us, however at variance with our own opinion, and our own judgment, even when in opposition to our previous experience. This ready credence should appear to be caused from so great a regard for veracity, that we cannot presume to question its guiding the minds of every one with whom we confidentially converse.

We see in an instant the immense importance of acquiring and inculcating habits of the strictest truth. Whatever so essentially tends to the concord and felicity of society, it must be of momentous consequence to cherish and promulgate.

No idea can be formed of the important effect such habits would produce. The most perfect confidence would not be the least of its benefits, and the most perfect inward tranquillity. For no species of deception can be practised without causing vexation and trouble to the practiser, and many a cheek has blushed, and many a heart palpitated at the apprehended or realized detection of mistakes and exaggeration in common conversation. Exaggeration is but another name for falsehood : to exaggerate, is to pass the bounds of truth ; and how can those bounds be passed, without entering upon the precincts of falsehood ? There can be but a true or a false representation. There can be no medium ; what is not true, must be false.

There is a strange maxim that has in some manner crept into common use, for the admission of which one cannot readily account :—" Truth must not be spoken at all times." Its intended meaning must be, that when the speaking of truth is likely to give pain, or cause mischief, it is better to be silent. But there is another meaning, and one equally obvious and feasible, that may be attached to it, or rather drawn from it, viz. "if truth must not be always, falsehood must be sometimes spoken." A sentence that can bear such a mischievous construction, had better be exploded altogether.

Thus far we have only considered the ill consequences attending falsehoods incurred by carelessness, without having any positive or malignant intention to deceive: if so wide-spreading the evils resulting from this, the least culpable species of deception, what enormity of guilt must be attached to the deliberate and malignant liar! We make no apology for inserting this coarse expression; the real name of all bad things must be offensive.\* It is by giving them gentle and polished terms that we make them more easily used in conversation, and thus the ear is rescued from being offended, at the expense of the understanding being deluded by plausible misnomers. Persons flatter themselves that under the title of mistakes, exaggerations, allowable licenses of fancy, &c. &c. the widest departures from truth are sanctioned; but it cannot be too often repeated, that it is what we *are*, not what we *seem* to be, that is of importance to our happiness, and to our reputation. That exposure does not immediately follow deception, is no assurance that

---

\* In fact, it is the meaning of the word, and not the word itself, that is offensive. Who shrinks from saying, or hearing others say, to lie down, to lie still, lying asleep, lying awake; but use the words as expressive of falsehood, and so disgusting are the ideas conjured up, that every ear shudders at their sound, every lip avoids their utterance.



the moment of detection never will arrive,—is no assurance that our duplicity is not secretly and strongly suspected. Even while escaping public reprobation, are we escaping suffering? There is an inward monitor, that is never more busy or more probing than when the sacred laws of truth are violated. It is little consolation to elude public censure, whilst our hearts, however secretly, are profoundly wounded. It is little to preserve the apparent respect of society, whilst we feel we deserve its disdain,—whilst we feel we possess our own.

How many are the humiliations and miseries inevitably incurred by falsehood!—the downcast eye, that dreads to meet the open glance of friend or foe: the uncontrollable blush, that will unbidden rise to contradict the faltering accents of the trembling lips: the confusion of mind, that cannot be governed, and forbids the facile and prompt arrangement of the delusive tale we wish to tell: the necessity incurred by telling one lie, of telling many more to uphold that one. What wretchedness and shame must attend such laborious duplicity, crowned with that ever-present and pre-eminent anguish, the dread of detection! How different is this train of feeling, from that which glows in the bosom of truth!—the open unshrinking eye, that fears no glance, shuns no

observation : the cheek unblanched by fear, unreddened by shame : the firm voice, unbroken by quivering lips ; the clear pure mind, readily giving up the simple facts stored in its memory : a bosom tranquil and undismayed, at peace with itself and all the world. Who is there, that for any consideration this rich globe could offer, would be the former character, when he has it in his power to be the latter ?

Of the public estimation in which truth is held, we have numerous examples. Every one can enter into the animating, the delightful emotion, with which Petrarch must have received the gratifying tribute of public applause, when, on his appearing as witness in a cause, and approaching the tribunal to take the accustomed oaths, he was informed, that such was the confidence of the court in his veracity, he would not be required to take any oath—his word was sufficient.

Such a moment of pre-eminent and exquisite joy is attainable to every human being ; and those young people, who will resolve tenaciously to adhere to accuracy in every word they speak, may be assured that they will not pass through life without receiving testimonials of respect and admiration from every one acquainted with them, and may, under some circumstances or other, attract general admiration and even chance to

meet with public homage, as profound as that enjoyed by the Italian poet.

Was not the praise bestowed on Petrarch a tacit avowal, that veracity such as his was very rarely known? Nothing can be more easy than to speak truth; the unwise, the poor, the ignoble, the youthful, can all equally practise it. Nothing can be more difficult than to speak falsely; the wise, the rich, the great, the aged, have all failed in their attempts. It would be an easy road to distinction to be pre-eminent in an adherence to truth. We could enumerate many besides Petrarch, who have acquired respect by it among their fellow-citizens, and celebrity in the page of history. Can there be offered a more obtainable, a more gratifying, a more noble object of emulation to the youthful heart?

Honesty, fidelity, integrity, may each and all be deemed various forms of truth. Honesty denotes probity in pecuniary arrangements, and sincerity in avowing sentiments and in making professions. Fidelity implies faithfulness in attachments, and exactness in fulfilling promises. Integrity expresses uprightness of intention, and steadiness of conduct. Truth is evidently the parent of these virtues, since the characteristic of each is not to deceive; not to cheat a creditor, nor make false protestations; not to deceive a

friend, nor break a promise; not to delude by the assumption of false motives for a particular line of conduct, nor by a vacillating mode of behaviour.

#### JUSTICE.

Justice is the fundamental principle of every duty, as truth is the basis of every virtue. Justice, indeed, appears in many respects to be similar in its bearings to truth. It gives clear and simple rules of conduct, it is incompatible with every species and every degree of deception, and ought to govern every opinion that is given, and every sentiment that is expressed. It may with safety be pronounced, that where justice is not known, no virtue can exist.

As a rule of action, justice produces emotions of calm and steady satisfaction. However popular censures assail, however associates scorn, or enemies reprobate us, if without self-delusion, we feel the propriety and equity of our conduct, public reprehension and disdain are powerless to wound our peace or dignity. The innate sense of justice serves as a shield, on which such darts rebound innoxious.

“Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,  
And he but naked, (though locked up in steel)  
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.”

*Shakspeare.*

To act in opposition to the laws of justice, when those laws are known, is a crime of such deep magnitude, as must inevitably conduct to misery and disgrace. Whoever therefore values his honour, or his tranquillity, will shun the smallest approach to such guilt. But there are lesser errors, which are allowed sometimes to deform the cause of an otherwise honourable life, and are falsely deemed of no importance. But it can never be too frequently or too earnestly repeated, that every deviation from right must be wrong, and that vice can never be justifiable, or honourable.

It is from loose and misleading sophistry, that such errors are admitted to creep into conduct. Thus the petty evils of injustice are entailed on society; the powerful make promises, which they never perform; the opulent incur debts, which they never discharge; the sentimental pronounce vows, which they never fulfil; the rights of property are misconceived, and the dues of charity improperly dissipated.

A certain help, or courtesy, or gift is promised; the promiser allows himself to believe, this may or may not be binding. Thus judging, he omits it, or forgets it; and whilst acquitting himself, is arraigned by the deceived individual as base and ungenerous. Money is lent, or goods

given up on certain considerations, but these the borrower or purchaser deems mere matters of trade; and if he cannot easily repay it, he considers his defalcation as one common to commerce, and pursues new schemes, careless of his first claims. Benefactions bestowed for the relief of poverty, are often partially, too often wholly, swallowed up in other expenditures, which the disbursers, with peaceful conscience, pronounce the general custom. Yet these several acts, view them as we may, are all positive acts of injustice; and though a certain mode of describing them renders the description less offensive, the fact remains the same, and the actors must feel twinges of self-accusation,—must expect to suffer secret reprobation and contempt.

Now, as this suffering and disgrace may be avoided, why not preserve our honour and our happiness from even these small taints? not to say any thing of thus offending against morality and religion. It were better not to accept trusts, which we cannot faithfully discharge; better never give the joy of a promise, than risk the danger of its non-fulfilment. In short, any thing is better than incurring the smallest chance of committing an act of injustice.

## ECONOMY.

The present is peculiarly an age of extravagance. The circumstances of our country during the last few years, on which it is unnecessary now to dilate, have led us as a people to contract habits of unnecessary expenditure, of which even our late reverses have not completely cured us. Certain merchants, particularly, have set bad examples in this matter. But economy is nevertheless one of the virtues most important to the merchant's success; and for this reason we shall speak of it the more fully.

There is no virtue so unduly appreciated as economy, nor is there one more truly worthy of estimation; a neglect of economy eventually leads to every misery of poverty and degradation, not unfrequently to every variety of error and of crime. Dr. Johnson asserted, "that where there was no prudence, there was no virtue." Of all the maxims pronounced by that great moralist, perhaps no one was more just or more instructive. Even in that branch of prudence that directs us to take cognizance of our pecuniary affairs, the propriety of this aphorism is very striking.

The progress of civilization has incurred a necessity of barter and exchange as the mean of

subsistence. Thus wealth, as the medium of acquiring all the comforts and all the luxuries of life, has obtained high consideration among mankind. Philosophers may therefore scoff as much as they please at the value placed upon riches, but they will never succeed in lessening the desire for their possession. When considered as the mean of enjoying existence in comfort, it must be seen that it is only by the judicious expenditure of wealth, that this end can be obtained. Avarice, (in other words, the accumulation of money, without any proposed aim for the eventual disbursement of such accumulated wealth,) avarice is so despicable and so ridiculous a vice, that it is almost universally decried. The good sense of the age detects its folly, and the taste of the age opposes its encouragement. But, because to hoard without a motive is vicious, let it not be rashly pronounced, that to spend without limits is virtuous. All extremes are faulty; in no instance more strikingly so than in the one before us. Avarice is in itself a crime, inasmuch as it leads to many acts of injustice and cruelty: the miser often wringing from the poor and the powerless, their hard-earned pittance, by usurious exactions; often denying to those who have a claim upon his fortune, a mite to rescue them from wretchedness, perhaps from guilt. **These are**



some of the sins incurred by avarice. Let us survey the evils caused by the prodigal. Instead of hoarding, he lavishly spends the wealth that falls into his hands. The largest fortune, the greatest resources, must fail under such profuse disbursement. Pass a few years, and the prodigal is penniless. How few, under such circumstances, but, directly or indirectly, are guilty of injustice and cruelty ! Debts unpaid, friends deceived, kindred deprived of a rightful inheritance ;—such are the consequences of profusion, and are not such positive acts of injustice and cruelty ? Let those, therefore, who indignantly stigmatize the miser as a pest to society, and, in a fancied honourable horror of miserly meanness, are for showing their nobler spirit by running into an opposite extreme, reflect, that though different the means, how similar the results of profusion ; how exactly conducting to the same crimes and miseries. The taste of the age is so much more friendly to prodigality ; the lavish expenditure of wealth, by conducting to the gratification of society, is so often unduly applauded, that it is an extreme much more likely to be rushed upon. But when the real consequences of its indulgence are fairly and dispassionately surveyed, its true deformity will be quickly perceived.

Unhappily, the measures directed by economy are sometimes of a nature so similar in appearance to those dictated by avarice, that they are confounded with each other. We have only to reflect from what motives economy emanates, to demonstrate how widely it differs from avarice.

Economy may be defined as a just expenditure of wealth, and is as necessary to the honest and liberal disbursement of the largest as of the smallest income. But in the first case, the restrictions it imposes cause no external appearance: it acts with a secret influence, and the end is gained without the means being visible. But in a small and limited income, the regulations dictated by economy are obvious and intrusive, restraining every superfluity of food, apparel, and accommodation. Yet the motives and the aim are the same with the wealthy as the indigent economist, viz. to make the income cover the expenditure. If, therefore, the action is honourable in the rich, it must be equally so in the poor man.

But what are the motives that in every case urge to economy? We will recapitulate them. First, a desire honestly to discharge every debt incurred; next, a wish to avoid being compelled to be thrown upon the bounty of others, and thereby running a risk of being burdensome to those already burdened; drawing from the funds

of the prudent, or taxing the generosity of the benevolent. Third, an intention of laying up a sum for the season of sickness and infirmity ; for the uses of an increasing family ; for the wants of the poor and necessitous. Are any of these motives inimical to virtue ? are they, or any of them, incompatible with the purest generosity ? Are any of them such as a man need be ashamed to avow ? Are they not rather all, such as any man ought to be proud to acknowledge ?

But of what nature are the restrictions imposed by economy ? We will inquire. To expend money, to diffuse wealth, is a pleasure to every rightly attuned mind, to every mind but that of the miser. To check, therefore, this natural inclination, to deny ourselves this delightful indulgence, is surely no mean effort of resolution. Is it not, in fact, pure disinterestedness, giving up a selfish pleasure ? and wherefore give up a selfish pleasure, wherefore but from motives of justice ? Thus then we have traced economy arising out of the noblest principle that can dignify the human soul,—justice ; and exerting the purest virtue that can dignify or bless it,—disinterestedness.

In short, economy appears to induce the exertion of almost every laudable emotion ; a strict regard to honesty ; a laudable spirit of independ-

ence; a judicious prudence in providing for the wants, a steady benevolence in preparing for the claims of the future. Really we seem to have run the circle of the virtues;—justice and disinterestedness, honesty, independence, prudence, and benevolence.

Is there any system that induces a more splendid exhibition of virtues?

We have now only to beg your closest scrutiny of the remarks here hazarded: weigh them maturely; and if, as we believe, you will detect in them no fallacy, no sophism, we beseech you to lay them up in your mind as incontrovertible maxims. We do not thus presume on the correctness of our deductions, from any confidence in our own reasoning, but from a perfect conviction of the singleness of our subject, the obviousness of the truths here collected.

The young and ardent, aspiring to exert the most spirited and most elevated virtues, will find, (if our definition be correct,) that the sober sentiment of economy gives room for their display in the most brilliant and extended sense; and that however imposing may be the first actions of profusion, it is certain in the end to be compelled to the perpetration, or to cause the perpetration, of the meanest arts, if not the most guilty deeds. Whilst economy, founded on the less dazzling,

but more intrinsic virtues, begins and closes its career in unblemished credit : in splendour, preserving splendour untarnished : in poverty, securing dignity untainted.

The mischief is, that economy is too often improperly used as synonymous to parsimony. Nothing can be more incorrect, for economy means the right spending of money, not the improper hoarding of it.

#### TEMPERANCE.

Temperance, like activity, preserves the body in health and vigour, and like every other exerted virtue repays its exertion, by enhancing the limited pleasures it allows. Upon the most epicurean principles, therefore, it recommends itself to practice, although, as rational and accountable beings, its claims are enforced on higher grounds. Surrounded as we are by innumerable sources of enjoyment, it is worse than folly to abuse the capacities we possess, by their undue indulgence. To yield to excesses in the pleasures of the table, is indeed the grossest weakness into which humanity can sink. The very brutes in this respect give a lesson to man ; for when do we hear of any animal, in a state of nature, being diseased by repletion ? And what are the natural consequences of intemperance ?—loss of health, of

strength, of mental energy, of even the delicate perception of those senses and appetites, so wantonly depraved and enfeebled. The very intellects and affections, those noble sources of our purest and highest delights, are debased by the degrading influence of intemperance; and man ceases to preserve his pre-eminence above brutes.

If the duty of temperance be imperative on men in other pursuits, it is particularly so on the merchant, since an undue excitement, such as that produced by stimulating liquors, may, in some particular emergencies, be attended by very serious consequences. Many an imprudent contract, formed under the enlivening and hope-exciting influence of a glass of champagne, has occasioned losses, which required years of severe toil to repair.

#### LIBERALITY.

“The liberal merchant,” is a character by no means incompatible with a well regulated economy. “The liberal,” says a high authority, “deviseth liberal things, and *by liberal things shall he stand.*” Indeed, even in a worldly point of view, true benevolence of character brings quicker and surer returns both of moral and physical profit, than grasping, sensual, selfish people, are apt to imagine. The encomium on benevolence,

which is given by an able writer in the following terms, is by no means exaggerated.

‘Benevolence is a kindly sentiment, that diffuses a pleasing influence on every social affection. It is but another word for charity, in its most enlarged sense, including sympathy, pity, candour, alms-giving. It implies whatever act ameliorates the distresses or heightens the joys of mankind. It is expressed by compassion to the poor, in bestowing money, advice, kindness, protection ; by courtesy to the rich, in acts of friendly aid and counsel, in generous participation of the prosperity of our neighbours, in cheerful association with friends and acquaintance. The motives from which it acts are as pure as the deeds to which it prompts. It acts not from desire of fame, or public applause, neither from ostentation nor worldly cunning ; not in anticipation of reward, not from the dictates of fashion or of policy. Benevolence has no alliance with such narrow motives ; it acts from a spirit of kindness and brotherly love extending to all mankind ; from enlarged views of philanthropy and Christian duty, from the dictates of pity and genuine sensibility. It considers all human beings as brethren, creatures of one common nature, liable to the same wants and imperfections, capable of the same

merits, sensible of the same evils, travelling the same journey, exposed to the same dangers and vicissitudes. It accepts and bestows service with the same simplicity. The emotion of benevolence fosters every other amiable emotion, as it softens the asperities of unamiable dispositions. It not only shows itself in charity by acts, but by looks and words; not only bestowing alms on the needy and unfriended, but dispensing candid opinions, mild reproofs, and animating plaudits. It is ever willing to receive the fairest construction of the conduct of others, ever more ready to expatiate on merit than to exaggerate defect, willing to disclose excellence and to conceal error. It is prompt in silencing the tale of scandal, hushing the whispered calumny, blunting the edge of satire, and calming the violence of anger. It supposes as well as practises kindness. It has no ear for slander, no eye for rage, no lip for vengeance, no heart for hatred. It listens to candid suggestions alone, looks only mildness, speaks only gentleness, feels only good will: the peace-diffusing spirit of society!

With so many avenues to admit tranquillity, with so many barriers to exclude strife, the truly benevolent mind must revel in felicity. As the bee extracts honey from every flower, even from the blossoms of the meanest and most unlovely



weed, so the benevolent mind discovers and draws some virtue from every bosom with which it associates. Thus the sweets it culls, while marking its generous industry, prove in the end a repaying hoard. Hence the benevolent have many friends, and few, if any, enemies; for there is a mildness, a humility, a frank gaiety, attendant on benevolence, that makes it win its easy way to the heart, and without any assumption at honours and regard, ensures both. Thus doing and wishing well to all, and by all loved and regarded, the benevolent man passes happily through life.'

By way of application of what is thus urged in behalf of this virtue, we will quote a story of Mr. Walker's, to show how much happiness may be produced by a trifling act of benevolence or liberality. He calls it

#### A FEW SHILLINGS WELL LAID OUT.

'As the burly coachman of one of the northern stages was remounting his box one bleak November night at the door of a little inn noted for spiced ale—

"How much will you take me to London for?" said a thinly clad boy of about fourteen, in a soft and doubting tone. The coachman turned round,

and with a look of contempt slightly qualified by pity, growled out—

“Can’t take you for less than half-a-crown.”

“I have only a shilling left,” said the boy.

“Why didn’t you say so at first?” said the coachman, replacing his foot on the nave of the wheel. The boy retreated a step into the shade.

“Come, jump up, my lad,” cried a gentleman on the coach, “I will find you eighteenpence.”

“Are you not very cold?” said the gentleman, after a short interval.

“Not very,” replied the boy, rubbing his hands cheerily up and down in the pockets of his cotton trowsers. “Not very; I was thinking of London.”

“And what are you going to do there?” said the gentleman. The boy replied that he was going to be bound apprentice to his uncle, who kept a cook’s shop in the Borough. Then he told his own little history, and how he had travelled up one hundred and fifty miles with the few shillings his widowed mother had been able to muster for him; and he concluded with a very intelligent account of his native place, and a no less amusing one of the principal people in its neighbourhood.

“And what do you intend to do to-night?” said the gentleman.

“I shall go to my uncle’s,” replied the boy.

“But how will you find him out? We shall not arrive before midnight; besides, your uncle will be gone to bed. Come, I will give you five shillings, and you can stay comfortably at the inn till morning.”

At the first appearance of lamps, the boy began to count them, and had just given up with the exclamation, “Well! if there are not more lamps in this one street than in all our town—” when the coachman called out to him—

“I say, young man, where are you going to put yourself to-night?”

“I shall stop where you stop,” said the boy.

“But you’ve no money, you know.”

“Ay,” said the boy triumphantly, “but this gentleman will me give some.”

“So much the better for you,” said the coachman.

At the inn, the gentleman took the boy apart, and, putting five shillings into his hand, told him to get a comfortable supper and a good night’s rest, and not to let any one know how much money he had. “In the morning,” continued he, “make yourself as decent as you can, and go to your uncle’s with a shilling or two in your pocket. And now, my lad, I hope you will be steady and do well in the world; and above all, I recommend you never to forget your poor mo-

ther." The boy was less profuse in his thanks than might have been expected.

---

"What is your business with me, young man?" said Mr. B., as a decently dressed, smart youth of about seventeen, was shown into the library.

"I am the boy, sir, you gave five shillings to on the coach, three years since, last November."

"What do you say?" said Mr. B.—"Oh! now I recollect the circumstance, though I do not recollect you; but what is your will with me, and how did you contrive to find me out?"

The youth told his story, interrupted by occasional questions from Mr. B., in nearly the following words:

"When you gave me the money, sir, I felt more than I said. Your name I saw on your portmanteau, and I happened to hear your servant tell the hackney coachman where to drive; so it came into my mind that I would never rest till I had shown you that I was not ungrateful. In a few days I came to look at your house. I owe you more than you think, sir. When I found my uncle, I will say he received me kindly enough; but he seemed to look upon me much more as soon as he heard how a gentleman like you had been pleased to stand my friend; and I do not think but I should have been a very differ-

ent character to what I am, if I had not had the good fortune to see you. I should have come long ago, but I hope you will excuse me for saying I did not forget your advice not to neglect my mother. Now, however, she is so comfortably off, that she has sent me word I need trouble myself no farther on her account. I hope, sir, you will not take it amiss—" (here he paused and blushed;)—"but why I have taken the liberty to come to-day is, my uncle at this time of the year makes a kind of large, seasoned pie, which is much thought of by the better sort of people in our neighbourhood. It will be nothing to a gentleman like you, I know; but if you will only allow me to bring you one,—” said the youth in a supplicatory tone.

“Well,” said Mr. B. with a smile, “as I clearly perceive it is a free offering on your part, I accept it willingly. Your gratitude does you great credit. Bring your pie as soon as you please, and let me see you again this day week, that I may tell you how I like it.”

A day or two after, Mr. B. had a dinner party, at which something occurred to induce him shortly to relate the boy's story. It drew forth various commendatory remarks, which were put an end to by a fashionable witling of the day, expressing an affected curiosity just to see what it was “the

better sort of people" in the Borough liked. He said he had rather a turn for that kind of thing, and had lately been reading some account of the manner of living in Madagascar. In consequence of this sally, it was resolved to have the pie introduced ; when, contrary to all expectation, and after much grimace, it was ascertained to be a pie of real and original merit, and its history giving it an additional zest, it met with much applause. Mr. B.'s chief guest, a man of great patronage and intrigue, partly to introduce a fling at the witling, whom he hated for a personal jest, and partly to please his host, whose interest he wanted, desired he might have one of the pies sent to his house ; whereupon an expectant at the lower end of the table immediately protested his lordship, as usual, showed his taste, and begged to follow so high an authority. A baronet of pretence joined in the request, for the sake of a subject to dilate upon at his own table, and for an appropriate opportunity of signifying his acquaintance with a grandee of the first class. A wealthy member of the lower house, who had not spoken a word before, ventured to express a similar wish, simply because he was not willing to let the day pass without saying something. An indefatigable fashion-hunter, judging it a possible case of vogue, resolved not to be left behind ; and lastly, an un-

principled wit modestly gave a double order, chuckling at the opportunity of getting a good thing he never meant to pay for.

The donor of the pie made his appearance at the appointed time, and his anxiety was changed into delight, when he found his present had given satisfaction to Mr. B. ; but when he was informed of the whole of his success, he was all but overwhelmed. He hurried back to his uncle with the joyful news, and the worthy man of victuals, who had hitherto been kept in ignorance of his nephew's proceedings, no sooner recovered from his astonishment, than he confidently anticipated countless wealth and never-dying fame from the patronage of his distinguished customers. But alas! he was unversed in the intricate and slippery ways of the world, and especially of that part of it which lies in the interior of great men's houses. He naturally concluded his pie had been sought for simply for its merits, and that consequently it would make its own way ; and he honestly resolved it should continue to deserve its reputation. But his praiseworthy intentions were doomed to meet with no reward in the quarter he most calculated upon ; and from the household ministers of the West in the plenitude of their power, he experienced nothing but mortification and defeat. Every pie-purveyor's place was filled

up, in possession and reversion, through interest and by means, of which his simple soul never dreamed, and he not only never received a second order, but was unable to obtain payment for half the first. However, after all, the balance was greatly in his favour; for the first noise of his success prodigiously increased his custom amongst his plainer dealing neighbours, who considered it would be showing an unpardonable want of taste not to eat his pies even to surfeit.

But, to return to the hero of the story, in whom Mr. B. began to take a permanent interest. Finding from examination that he had attended more to pie-making than to scholarship, he advised him to devote his leisure-time to attendance upon some competent master; "For," said he, "if you get on in the world, which you seem well qualified to do, you will find the want of suitable acquirements a constant hinderance and mortification. Lose no time in beginning, and I will charge myself with the expense." With such encouragement it is not to be wondered at that the scholar soon came to write a beautiful hand, and to be more than commonly expert in accounts, by which means he was enabled greatly to assist his less learned uncle, who, in return, made him first his partner, and finally his heir; and to his benefactor, who happened to possess a neglected



property in the vicinity of his residence, he was fortunate enough, by his local knowledge and zealous superintendence, to render the most important services.'

#### POLITENESS.

"Call you politeness a virtue?" says our young reader. Ay, we reply, because genuine politeness is the offspring of benevolence. A gentleman is a Christian in spirit that will take a polish. The rest are but plated goods; and however excellent their fashion, rub them more or less, the base metal will appear through. Perhaps, before we finish this volume, we may find room for a chapter on the character of a true gentleman, in which we may explain our peculiar notions of politeness more particularly. At present, we will content ourselves by illustrating its importance, and the agreeable effects it often produces, by a short anecdote.

An Englishman making the grand tour towards the middle of the last century, when travellers were more objects of attention than at present, on arriving at Turin, sauntered out to see the place. He happened to meet a regiment of infantry returning from parade, and taking a position to see it pass, a young captain, evidently desirous to make a display before the stranger, in crossing

one of the numerous water-courses with which the city is intersected, missed his footing, and in trying to save himself, lost his hat. The exhibition was truly unfortunate—the spectators laughed—and looked at the Englishman, expecting him to laugh too. On the contrary, he not only retained his composure, but promptly advanced to where the hat had rolled, and taking it up, presented it with an air of unaffected kindness to its confused owner. The officer received it with a blush of surprise and gratitude, and hurried to rejoin his company—there was a murmur of applause—and the stranger passed on. Though the scene of a moment, and without a word spoken, it touched every heart—not with admiration for a mere display of politeness, but with a warmer feeling for a proof of that true charity, “which never faileth.” On the regiment being dismissed, the captain, who was a young man of consideration, in glowing terms related the circumstance to his colonel. The colonel immediately mentioned it to the general in command; and when the Englishman returned to his hotel, he found an aide-de-camp waiting to request his company to dinner at head-quarters. In the evening he was carried to court—at that time, as Lord Chesterfield tells us, the most brilliant court in Europe—and was received with particular at-

tention. Of course during his stay at Turin he was invited everywhere; and on his departure he was loaded with letters of introduction to the different states of Italy. Thus a private gentleman of moderate means, by a graceful impulse of Christian feeling, was enabled to travel through a foreign country, then of the highest interest for its society as well as for the charms it still possesses, with more real distinction and advantage than can ever be derived from the mere circumstances of birth and fortune, even the most splendid.

We cannot more appropriately conclude this anecdote than by adding the excellent, and excellently expressed advice of Polonius to his son, on his departure for a foreign country. The precepts are admirably adapted to form a man of the world and a gentleman, in the best sense of the terms; and in my opinion are well worth committing to memory by those whom they concern.

Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. **Beware**  
Of entrance into quarrel! but, being in,  
**Bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee.**

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice ;  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.  
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy :  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.  
Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ;  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all—to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

#### GOOD TEMPER.

That exertion of self-control which consists in regulating the temper, is of great importance in the transactions of trade. Its neglect is very injurious to the merchant, as many have found to their cost, when they have sacrificed their own interest, or done violences to their consciences, in order to put down an obnoxious rival or supposed enemy. Nevertheless, for once that the actions of human beings are guided by reason, ninety and nine times they are more or less influenced by temper. It is an even temper only, that allows reason her full dominion, and enables us to arrive at any intended end by the nearest way, or at all. On the other hand, there is no obstacle to advancement or happiness so great, as an undisciplined temper—a temper subject to pique, or

uncertainty. Pique is at once the bitterest and most absurd enemy a man can have. It will make him run counter to his dearest interests, and at the same time render him completely regardless of the interests of all around him. It will make him blindly violate every principle of truth, honesty, and humanity, and defeat the most important business or break up the happiest party, without remorse, or a seeming consciousness of doing what is wrong. It is pity that those who allow themselves to be subject to it, are not treated with a great deal more severity than they usually are ; for in truth, they are greater pests to society than all the criminals who infest it, and in my opinion, are often much more blameworthy. We have remarked, that persons much given to pique, are frequently particularly strict in the outward observances of religion. They must have strange notions, or rather no notions at all, of the spirit of Christianity ; and the doctrines they hear must fall upon the most stony of places. Nay, we have met with persons so insensible to propriety, as to avow, without scruple, that they have left off attending a place of worship from some supposed affront they have received there. The concluding sentence of Fénelon's *Telemachus* is so much in unison with our sentiments, and is so well expressed, that we will conclude with it.

“Above all things be on your guard against your temper. It is an enemy that will accompany you everywhere, to the last hour of your life. If you listen to it, it will frustrate all your designs. It will make you lose the most important opportunities, and will inspire you with the inclinations and aversions of a child, to the prejudice of your gravest interests. Temper causes the greatest affairs to be decided by the most paltry reasons ; it obscures every talent, paralyses every energy, and renders its victims unequal, weak, vile and insupportable.”

#### PERSEVERANCE.

There is not a virtue that it is more important to inculcate in the young mind than perseverance. It is to the mind, what firmness is to the heart, the urging and sustaining principle. By persisting in its attempts, the infant acquires the use of its limbs and various organs ; it learns to speak, to walk, &c. By persisting in his attempts, the philosopher equally acquires an enlarged power of thought and ratiocination. There is no valuable knowledge that can be obtained without study, as there is no extensive work that can be perfected without labour. The student must persevere in urging his faculties through every stage of science, before he can reach its highest point ;

as the architect must continue his toils from the foundation, gradually ascending, before he can complete his edifice. The most stupendous difficulties vanish before the gradual efforts of perseverance.

When we look upon the ponderous structures raised by man, we cannot but feel the amazing inadequacy of the agent to the operation. We are astonished that the diminutive animal, man, whose utmost height scarce reaches to the depth of the foundation-stone, whose utmost strength seems inadequate to remove the smallest beam, has yet succeeded in erecting the tower and temple, whose size and elevation are equally majestic. Art could indeed plan the form, and give the engines that aid the labour; but only by countless repetition of the efforts of the toiling hand, could art embody its conceptions.

The young, to whom perseverance is most necessary, are too apt to appreciate its usefulness the least. Let the youth, beholding any stupendous work of labour, pause to reflect what innumerable efforts of the busy fingers must have been again and again repeated, ere perfection crowned the work.

In looking upon the stately vessel, moving majestically on the yielding waves, let us consider, what perseverance must have been exerted to

bring her to this state of completion ;—that plank was added to plank, nail driven after nail ; that a day, a week, a month's labour scarce made any visible progress in the work ; and that only by unceasing endeavours, and after many remissions of labour and rest, was the whole perfected.

The stonc-cutter's progress is perhaps the slowest of any artificer's : many hours does he urge his delicate saw, on the almost impenetrable marble, ere the smallest incision be made ; yet he cheerfully prosecutes his daily business, assured that his perseverance will ultimately divide the block.

Let the young press the moral to be adduced from these examples, deeply on their hearts, and often recall their flagging spirits by the inference to be thence drawn,—that however difficult or extensive the work to be achieved, by perseverance he shall assuredly achieve it. However moderate his abilities, however limited his strength, let him not despair : reiterated attempts must finally produce success.

We cannot better illustrate these views, than by the following anecdote.\*

---

\* From Amer. Mon. Mag.



## NIL DESPERANDUM.

Truly has it been said by the bard of **ALL TIMES**, that

There is a tide in the affairs of men,  
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune,—

and perhaps this belief has never been more strongly borne out, than in the personage whose name follows. *John Scott*, together with his brother William, was educated in the free-school of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in England. They were both children in the middle class of society. Both were articled to attorneys, and both, at the expiration of these articles, resolved to push their fortune at her great mart, London. John, with whom only we have now to do, went through his term, and got admitted to the bar. But when this was done, poor John could not get a client. Unfortunate young man, his family-connexions were few, humble, and far away. It was true, that he had studied deeply and effectually the profession which he had taken up;—it was true, that his companions in private society admired the wit, as much as the knowledge, of honest Jack Scott. In the clubs, in the debating room, in all those places where “small artillery” is practised, Scott invariably bore the palm away, and yet he continued to remain,—a briefless barrister. In

vain he was seen daily in Westminster Hall, with wig of snowy whiteness, gown of ample flow, and purple bag, in which, *briefly* to speak, briefs there were none at all. A motion of course produced him now and then a half guinea, but even these were like angel-visits, "few and far between;" and though they brought him the small piece of gold, they brought him not honour nor distinction.

As time wore away, so also wore the patience of poor Scott. A fine flow of spirits had long sustained him, but gradually he was becoming attenuated in frame, and melancholy in countenance. Some demon whispered him, that he had mistaken the road to fortune, and suggested that he had better retreat in time, and endeavour to patch up his hopes by another course of life. He wrestled with the spirit, however, for a time, still hoping with each day that something might turn up, to draw him from his obscurity;—for be it observed, that Mr. Scott was aware, and justly aware, that he had within him matter for higher observation than hitherto had fallen upon him. The office of reporter to a daily paper, the contribution of an article occasionally for a magazine, and the few motions above alluded to, in the courts, enabled him to keep the wolf from the door, and to pay his expenses in going on the circuit twice a-year, where the pleasure of seeing

one or two mammoth leaders carry away all the practice, and the opportunity of studying human nature in the best school—that of litigation—were his sole rewards ;—for it must be remarked, that though a young man may, in Westminster Hall, have an opportunity of startling the public ear, by some unexpected and powerful remark, yet on circuit the juniors are puppets in the hands of the leaders ; who take especial care not to hazard their popularity, by allowing the young men to exhibit too much.

Such continued to be the life and *sufferings* of John Scott ; his energies cramped, his spirits bowed down, his labours those of drudgery, slavery, and obscurity, which last, by the way, was “ th’ unkindest cut of all.” It was no longer a reckoning of months ; they had stretched themselves into years, and Mr. Scott still continued a briefless barrister, a reporter, writer, wit, and we had almost said—a broken-hearted man. His elasticity of spirit began now to fail him. He thought seriously of giving up the law, and of trying his fortune in commercial or some other speculation. The thought of this however, the reflection of the time which he had expended in intense study,—the lore which he felt conscious he had treasured up,—the many whom his own heart told him were far inferior to himself in

talents, and who, nevertheless, were rolling in affluence, all added gall to bitterness, and great was the difficulty with which he arrived at the conclusion, that all this must be abandoned, if he wished to emerge from the obscurity in which he was plunged.

In fact, he proceeded to pack up his personals, and pay his little accounts; he negotiated with an eminent bookseller to take his small but valuable collection, and even took his passage in a vessel which was proceeding to Newcastle—his native place.

At this very juncture, dame fortune was preparing for him an important change. The celebrated Lord George Gordon was about to take his trial, and the gentleman who was retained as junior counsel being unexpectedly prevented from performing his duty, the brief and the opening of the cause were by happy chance given to Mr. Scott. It was a god-send. He made himself master of his subject—he was favoured with an opportunity which enabled him to *electrify* the court. All eyes were turned upon the hitherto unknown young man. Briefs were from this time poured in upon him. He daily rose in popular opinion, and in that of “the powers that be.” He gradually became Solicitor and Attorney General. He rose to the rank of Lord High

Chancellor of Great Britain, which office he retained for more than a quarter of a century ; and the obscure John Scott, without a farthing, was merged in the Earl of Eldon, the possessor of 50,000*l.* in annual receipt—the friend of kings and princes—the leader of a powerful party in the state.

---

We may sum up our list of virtues peculiarly requisite for the merchant, thus : honesty, candour, firmness, prudence, truth, justice, economy, temperance, liberality, politeness, good temper, or rather self-control, and perseverance. We hope the list is not too formidable. We trust that none of our readers, who may be desirous to do things, as the advertisements say, “at the shortest notice,” will consider it a less trying, and therefore more feasible undertaking, to make a fortune without these virtues, than to practise them all ; for he must remember that the practice of them will be productive of more happiness than the possession of a princely fortune without them ; and moreover, that virtue pays her votaries by the day ; whereas, fortune defers her wages, in most instances, until life is nearly spent, and the sense of enjoyment is almost exhausted.

To the young and ingenuous we may commend this high standard of excellence, as well as the uncompromising code of merchants' duties which we shall hereafter present, without any fear of their being considered too strict for the times in which we live. Truth and justice are immutable; and the exalted character which the American merchant hitherto has, and we trust hereafter will maintain, is based upon their unalterable laws. We cannot close this short summary of the leading moral qualifications of the merchant, more appropriately than by quoting the peroration of Governor Everett's late Address to the Mercantile Library Association of Boston.

“In mere prosperity and the wealth it diffuses, there is no ground for moral approbation; though I believe in any long period of time it will be found that those communities only are signally prosperous where virtuous principle is revered as the rule of conduct. It is the chief glory of our commercial community, that the old standard of morals is still kept up; that industry and frugality are still held in honourable repute; that the rage for speculation has not eaten out the vitals of character, and that lucky fraud, though plated stiff with ill-gotten treasure, dare not yet lift up its bold, unblushing face in the presence of the humblest man, who eats the bread of honest industry.

So may it still remain ; and let it still be your object, gentlemen of the Mercantile Library Association, to uphold this well-approved character of our ancient metropolis. Never let the mere acquisition of wealth be an exclusive pursuit. Consider it of tenfold importance to manifest, in all the transactions of life, that quick sense of honour “ which feels a stain like a wound,” and that integrity which the mines of Peru could not bend from the path of principle. Let wealth be regarded as the instrument of doing as well as of enjoying good. In a republican government, the mercantile class, in the natural course of things, is the only one whose members, generally speaking, can amass fortune ; let it be written on your hearts in the morning of life, that wealth is ennobled only in its uses. Form, from the first, a large conception of the character of the liberal and upright merchant. Regard him as one to whom the country looks to sustain her honour in the hour of trial ; to uphold her public establishments, to endow her charities, to be the father of her orphans : as one whom no success will make ashamed of his vocation ; who will adorn his days of prosperity with moderation and temper ; and hold fast his integrity, though fortunes turn to ashes in his grasp. Improve the opportunities for cultivating your minds which this institution

presents, never greater than at this season. The keys of knowledge are in your hands; the portals of her temple are open to you. On the shelves of her libraries there are stores of information, which, besides contributing to your success in your calling, will give grace to good fortune, and comfort and resource in disaster. Above all, while you pursue with spirit the business of your vocation, and follow the paths of enterprise to the ends of the earth, let a well-instructed conscience be the companion of your way. Her guidance will safely lead you, when calculation is bewildered and prudence is at fault. Though your hope in all else be blasted, fail not, my young friends, to acquire the pearl of great price, that wisdom whose merchandize is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. Let this be the object of your life, and while the guilty glories of war are deprecated by mankind, and the weary honours of successful ambition weigh like lead on the wearer, you will enjoy, in the esteem and gratitude of the community and the peace of your own minds, the happy portion of **THE LIBERAL AND UPRIGHT MERCHANT.**"



## EDUCATION SUITABLE FOR THE MERCHANT.

IT is not our purpose, under this head, to discuss the various branches of instruction in which it is well for a merchant, or any other man, who wishes to be intelligent, to be trained at school. There is already a great abundance of books which treat of these matters clearly enough for all ordinary purposes. We will therefore refer our readers to the common treatises on education, of which some dozens may be found at every bookstore, for excellent precepts on the best method of learning elocution, arithmetic, grammar, geography, chemistry, natural philosophy, geology, &c., if he wishes to make up for any deficiencies in the knowledge of these subjects which he may have acquired at school. Supposing our young reader to have been as well grounded as clerks usually are in what are called the common branches of an English education, we will offer a few hints in relation to a species of *self-instruction* which we would have him put in practice when he is fitting himself for the compting-room, and during the time of his apprenticeship.

Self-instruction ! To most persons no very easy task ; but a highly necessary one to every

man who would possess knowledge which he can properly call his own. The routine of the school and the lecture-room—the mere *pouring in* of so much of this science and so much of that; a duodecimo of chemistry, an octavo of philosophy, and a quarto of history; here a modicum of mathematics, and there a bushel of belles-lettres; all listened to, or read, or said by rote, will not make a well-educated man. One must learn to take up a study of his own free will, examine it with reference to its object and practical purposes, and task his utmost powers to comprehend and apply it. He must search it out in books and things, for the satisfaction of his own mind; read, think, converse and write upon it. He must make it a main pursuit for his study-hours, until he has obtained a mastery over it. If it be a science, he must become knowing; if an art, skilful, in it, by his own industry and force of will. In short, he must instruct himself. He must apply the wholesome counsel of the great dramatist, “Let your own discretion be your tutor.” A single study thus pursued and mastered, will go farther to make a man accomplished, than the mere committing to memory and reciting of a whole encyclopædia. When you have thus compassed a single subject by your own proper energies, and possessed your-

self of it with a firm grasp, you have prepared yourself to take up any other subject of knowledge which your profession or your inclinations may render desirable, and handle it with ease and confidence.

We will suppose, for example, that a young clerk happens to have his curiosity awakened respecting a single subject of experimental philosophy, say electricity. Perhaps he has attended a lecture where some electrical experiments were performed. He will probably obtain some simple materials and perform a few of the experiments himself. This may lead him to investigate the principles which they illustrate. He reads a book on the subject, in which he finds a reference to another. This last is obtained, and a small addition is made to his apparatus. Presently we find him husbanding his pocket-money and perquisites, to buy an electrical battery and enlarge his library by the addition of some volume of Dr. Hare or the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge; and so he goes on reading, investigating, performing experiments, attending lectures, conversing with those who are better informed than himself, and making memoranda of his experiences and results, till he has pretty well exhausted the subject, and is ready to take up some kindred branch of science.

By this time he has learnt to study and investigate for himself; he has acquired a taste for science; he has found out that the natural world presents something worthy the examination of a rational mind, and that there is a pure pleasure in the very pursuit of information, independent of the gratification arising from its attainment; and it is ten to one that from that time forward he devotes his leisure hours to the noble task of self-instruction.

Take another example. Suppose a young man to be desirous of learning the art of composition. He has observed that some of his acquaintances are well skilled in it, and that they thus possess a certain degree of consideration in the counting-room, on account of their ability to write a clear, neat and comprehensive letter; while others cannot put six words together without murdering the king's English; and yet perhaps he may not have remarked any very striking contrast in the general intelligence of these two classes of persons. He has arrived at the conclusion that there is some mystery about this thing; and he is determined that, cost what it may, he will fathom it. He possesses himself of some of the books on rhetoric and composition; and to his great disappointment, he finds that most of them treat of the marshalling of words

into sentences, and the embellishments of tropes and figures, and graces of style, on the presumption that the learner is already possessed of a subject and has made considerable progress in the art. He searches in vain for a book which begins at the beginning, by instructing him how to think—how to originate something of his own, to be expressed in the said words and sentences, and embellished with the said tropes and figures, and graces of style.

At last, peradventure, the thought strikes him that all writing must be about *things* of some sort or other, and that the simplest must be the most suitable to begin with. Perhaps, at the moment, he is seated in his own little apartment, pen in hand, and he suddenly resolves to describe the room itself, with his tables and chairs, desk and book-case, and to throw his composition into the form of a letter to some cousin in the country.

With many misgivings as to the result, he begins. At any rate, he has overcome the first difficulty. He has got *something to say*. He soon finds that this is more than one half of the battle gained. The matter comes fast enough. He goes into the description minutely. The forms of the objects suggest comparisons, and behold! a figure of rhetoric presents itself, without any effort. The uses of the various articles of fur-

niture suggest little incidents connected with their history, and he finds himself occasionally relating an anecdote. His description thus runs into narrative. Two of the forms of composition are thus commenced ; and before he rises from his desk, he perceives that the great mystery of composition lies in *having something to say, with a determination to say it.*

After his first attempt he seeks other objects for description, and other subjects for narrative. When he has become somewhat skilled in these simple forms of composition, he returns to his books, and with their assistance teaches himself to recognize and use the figures and ornaments of language, and to measure and correct his own writings by the classical standards of the language. When he is called upon to defend some position he has assumed, or assign reasons for some line of conduct he may have adopted, he learns the methods of argumentative writing ; and thus he goes on learning, to such extent as his time and means allow, what few ever learn to perfection, the art of written expression ; always improving, so long as he keeps in view the idea with which he started, that to write efficiently, he must have something to say—that the subject is the main thing ; and when this is firmly grasped by the mind, the words and phrases, and airs

and graces, come along as spontaneously as water runs to its natural level.

Let not the reader charge us with digressing from our immediate subject, the education proper for a merchant. The training suitable for any rational man designed for active life, is suitable for him ; and this training is precisely that which will give him such command of his thoughts and faculties as to enable him to teach himself any subject of knowledge which his situation may require. If he finds any given subject too difficult to begin with, let him take up another, more easy of comprehension, and master it fully, by way of preparation for the more difficult ; but until he has learnt to compass a subject by his own unaided efforts, he can scarcely be said to have fairly begun the great business of self-instruction.

If we are asked what subjects should be commended to the notice of the young denizen of the compting-room, we would say, the Mathematics, and their application to surveying, navigation and natural philosophy ; one branch of this comprehensive science being attempted at a time. After this, or before it, as the learner may choose, he may address himself to composition, logic, moral philosophy and political economy. Book-keeping is a matter of course.

“But will you not allow me some light read-

ing?" says my young clerk. Certainly, you must relax a little. But I would have this light reading intimately connected with your study and practice of composition and rhetoric. You may read Washington Irving, if you will promise me to study his style, and endeavour to learn how it is that he produces his effect, which so enchains the attention, and wins the reverence and regard of his reader. You may even take half an evening every week for Boz; but you must not content yourself with laughing at his odd characters and whimsical combinations. You must study the principles of his art, and endeavour to recognize the essential characteristics which commend him to the admiration of his age and country, and enable him to command the instant attention of so many thousands of readers. In short, you may have some light reading as a relaxation from your severer studies; but even in these holiday hours you must read with a *purpose*, and that a higher purpose than mere amusement.

One word of caution. "Life is short," as the proverb says, "and art is long." There is no end to light reading. It is impossible even for professed critics and men of letters to keep pace with the popular literature of the day. It is therefore evidently necessary for one whose time



is limited, to confine his attention to the works of the very best among the poets, essayists and novelists of the language. We would therefore counsel our young friends not to meddle with third-rate or even second-rate productions in polite literature, until they have made themselves acquainted with the productions of the acknowledged masters in poetry and fiction.

We must now pass to another division of our subject, and if we have leisure when the present work is completed, we may possibly furnish the reader, in a separate volume, with some aids to self-instruction.

## CONDUCT DURING APPRENTICESHIP.

IN the last chapter, we have anticipated much of the advice which we would offer to the young apprentice in relation to the proper manner of spending that part of his time which should be devoted to the improvement of his mind. Our present purpose is to offer some hints respecting his conduct towards his employer, and his preparation for conducting business ; and to guard him against some of the temptations to which his situation may expose him.

## THE TRUE POLICY OF A CLERK.

Our first remark is, *that it is the true policy, as well as the duty of a clerk, to devote himself, during his apprenticeship, unreservedly to the interest of his employer.* Some young men think that the lighter and shorter they can make their day's work, the better it is for them ; that every hour they can withdraw from the business of the firm, and devote to themselves, their pleasures and recreations, is so much clear gain. There never was a greater mistake than this. For, in the first place, the habit of mind which they thus acquire will inevitably be continued after they are in business for themselves. Having

learned to esteem their employer's affairs a mere drudgery, they will transfer the same feeling to their own affairs, and it is ten chances to one, the concern will suffer in consequence. On the contrary, if they take an earnest, thorough-going, self-denying interest in the business of their employer,—if they identify themselves in feeling and purpose with the honour and advantage of the house, if they throw heart and mind into their daily work, and go to it with might and main and good intent, they not only gain approbation and confidence in their existing relation as clerks, but they fit themselves for performing their own business, at a future day, in the same efficient manner. A clerk who sustains this character of earnestness, devotedness and disinterestedness, during his apprenticeship, attracts the notice of the trade. When he attains his majority, he is a marked man; and his mark is "A. No. 1." He is sought as an agent or partner, and his establishment in business is an easy matter, compared with that of the young man, who, instead of volunteering for night-work, or grasping at the labouring oar through the day, has been noted for skulking out of the way when labour and attention were required, or who has evinced that his heart was at the opera or the club room, while his presence was required at the desk or the warehouse.

## CLUBS.

We have casually adverted to the club-room. Before we forget it, let us say one word about clubs. We perceive that they are growing very fashionable. We observe that, in Philadelphia alone, so many of them have recently sprung into existence, that, on their general anniversary, several thousands of young men are seen parading our streets to the sound of drum and fife, pipe and tabret, arrayed in fantastic dresses, which place them in the same category with play-actors and circus-riders; and we are led to inquire what the effect of these clubs may be on the characters of the persons composing them. In most cases we believe their professed object is innocent recreation. In many instances we believe it will be found, that the recreation degenerates into downright dissipation. But, on the supposition, that this were never to happen—that intoxicating drink and degrading amusements were never resorted to by these clubs, we ask, are they not wholly unnecessary? Do they not occasion a great waste of precious time? Are there not means of amusement and recreation abundant enough for any reasonable young man, without creating clubs expressly for the purpose of affording them? We believe there are; and upon this opinion we

found our advice to the young apprentice, to join no club which has recreation for its object. If he should be solicited to join a club which professes to afford the means of mutual improvement, let him first consult his own judgment and good sense, and inquire whether he may not promote the great object of self-instruction and improvement more successfully in the retirement of his chamber and the society of his books, than at the club-room, where half the evening will inevitably be consumed in debating frivolous questions of order, and aping the solemn nonsense of more grave, deliberative assemblies. For one club, where real business is done and real improvement effected, we venture to say there are ten where the whole time is spent in utter trifling, or in displays of oratorical vanity and flippancy by the most empty-headed of the members.

Society of some sort every young man should have; but there is no society so improving to his mind, and so humanizing and polishing to his manners, as that of the family and the fire-side. There is not a club of young men in existence that can afford an individual member a thousandth part of the improvement which he can gain, if his character and talents shall procure him admission into a well regulated family, where there are grown-up sons and daughters possessing culti-

vated minds. That is the club, my young friend, where you should seek admission ; but let me add, you will not gain it any the sooner for being seen parading the streets in a harlequin's dress, even though your folly should be countenanced by that of other young men as foolish as yourself.

The family is an association instituted by God himself, for the benefit of man. It is far superior to any association of human origin ; and in making a choice of societies for the purpose of improving yourself, you cannot go amiss in giving the preference to the family over the club.

#### TRUSTS.

Our next remark is, *that the apprentice should regard whatever knowledge he may, by his position, gain respecting his employer's affairs, and whatever money or property he may ever have confided to his care by the firm, as sacred trusts, never in any manner to be violated.* We consider it a violation of confidence for an apprentice to make his employer's affairs the subject of conversation, even among his fellow clerks. He must hear, and see, and learn ; but keep silent. He may know ; but he must be as if he knew not, when others are discussing the forbidden topics. He must sternly deny himself the foolish gratification of gossiping and speculating about those

matters in which his opinion is not required for the benefit of the house. By this course he will lose no consideration with his employers for lack of intelligence. They can perceive by his actions and demeanour, whether he understands what is proper to his station; whereas, if they by any chance should learn that he has been discussing matters above his sphere, they will not fail to note his forwardness, and withhold all confidence in future.

With respect to money trusts, it is of the very utmost importance that they should be held sacred. The clerk should never suffer himself to use, even for a day, what has been entrusted to him for any purpose, although he may have the certain prospect of replacing it. He should regard such a deposit as fire which will be sure to burn him if handled in any other manner than as a most inviolable trust.

#### SAVINGS.

Our next remark relates to *savings*. By means of perquisites, wages, or other proper sources of income, a clerk often has it in his power to lay up small sums regularly, during his minority. Now, to one who is in the way of daily observing operations in trade which yield, or appear to yield, large amounts of profit, and who

sees young men set up in business on large loans from their friends, and subsequently dashing away and apparently clearing some thousands per annum, it is quite natural that these little *savings* should appear so trifling as not to be worth the care and self-denial which they may cost. But they are not to be despised in themselves, however small the amount they may reach before they may be required for use; and the habits of frugality and economy which the amassing of his little hoard will have formed, will be worth to the young merchant on his setting up for himself, more than "much fine gold." By his system of laying up savings, he has already learnt to appreciate the comfort and independence of being what is termed in common parlance, "a little beforehand in the world;" while some of his unthrifty mates have already, by their carelessness and improvidence, become hardened to the inconvenience and disgrace of being always "a little behindhand." The first hundred dollars that a young man has honestly earned and laid up, has often been the making of him for life; while the circumstance of entering upon life saddled even with a small debt, has brought upon more than one individual the troubles of constant embarrassment and ultimate ruin. Begin, then, your little system of savings.



“Despise not,” as a great authority says, “despise not the day of small things.” However prosperous may be your future career, you will never have reason to look back upon these apparently trifling arrangements of economy, with other feelings than those of complacency and satisfaction.

#### COMPANIONS.

With respect to the choice of companions, it is unnecessary to add to the instruction which every young person has received on this head, from the time when he first penned that good old line in his school writing-book, “*Evil communications corrupt good manners*,” up to the last sermon or book which has afforded him precepts on this head. If he pay the least regard to our other hints, he will not require to be told that he must shun the company of those whom he does not wish to resemble, and seek that of the respectable in character and station. Be chiefly anxious about character. It is, after all is said, the chief element of credit. It is the capital, the solid, productive capital, which you are now laying up for future use. Vicious or frivolous companions pilfer it from you faster than you can accumulate, with all your care. Industry, ability, knowledge of business, property, all will fail to commend

you to the confidence of the world, if you are known to be in habits of intimacy with the profligate, the idle, or the dissipated. Shun them as a pestilence.

#### LEISURE HOURS.

From the remarks which we have already made under the head of Education, it is apparent that a clerk should adopt a regular system with respect to the employment of his leisure hours—the time, we of course mean, which does not properly belong to his employer. Now, to prevent all clashing of interests in this matter, it would be well to pursue a candid and ingenuous course with your employer—to let him know at a suitable time and in a modest way, what your plans in this respect are—that you are trying to improve your mind and enlarge your knowledge, not only of business, but of other subjects of liberal information. There are few merchants, we trust, who would not readily afford some facilities for the advancement of so laudable a purpose. There is not one in our country, we would fain believe, who would not feel a flush of gratification on learning that a young man in his employ preferred passing his evenings in the cultivation of his mind, to frequenting the haunts of dissipation and folly. There is not one, we do believe

who would not readily aid a clerk in so excellent a purpose as that of dividing his leisure hours between the retirement of his study and the enjoyment of such society as would improve his manners without corrupting his morals. It is well for a young man when he can, with open and ingenuous front, make known to his employer the places which he frequents and the company which he keeps during the time he is absent from the store. It is well when none of his employments or recreations are of such a nature as should bring a blush upon his countenance when avowed in the presence of the honourable and virtuous. Make this your test, then : go into no company, engage in no pursuit, which will not bear such a scrutiny ; and arrange such a system with respect to the occupation of your leisure, as will admit of your claiming for its observance the countenance and support of your employer.

We would fain enlarge upon some other topics which fall under this head ; but we have many subjects still before us, and we must pass on to the next division of our subject.

HINTS TO THE YOUNG MERCHANT UPON  
SETTING UP IN BUSINESS.

DID the reader ever see a party of urchins engaged in that old-fashioned New England sport called *coasting*, or *sliding down hill*, upon a sled? If he did, he must have noticed how entirely the whole success of any particular slide invariably depended upon having a *fair start*; and how greatly this circumstance of having a fair start depended upon the character of the adventurer. While your careless dare-devil fellow would jump upon his sled with his head foremost, and, resting upon his hands and knees, would start off with the impulse of his jump, to almost certain misadventure and overthrow, your quiet, careful youth would seat himself with great deliberation, upon his perilous vehicle, extending his legs in front at an angle of exactly forty-five degrees from the line of direction which he meant to pursue; so that his heel might gently touch the glacier on the side where a stump or a precipice threatened danger. Then you would see him carefully gather up the thongs attached to the forepart of his sled, so as to have it still more at his command, and having surveyed the *coast* which he intended to skirt, with the eye of an experienced navigator, he would set off, slowly

and gently at first, but with a gallant rapidity as he passed by the shipwrecked sleds of his less wary companions, and sailed off far into the plain at the bottom of the hill, confident of coming to anchor in his own good time and according to his original destination.

It is, for the most part, the same with a merchant. A great deal of his success depends upon his taking a fair start; and this is precisely what a headlong, careless, adventurous young man is not likely to do. He will not take time to consider what is necessary for ultimate success. He is accustomed to look forward no further than the next stage of his career, and having *got out* of his apprenticeship, he thinks that the next thing he must do is to *get in* to business, in order to *get along* in the world. GO AHEAD is his motto, as well as that of the coasting-boy who jumps upon his sled, head foremost, and breaks his nose before he reaches the foot of the hill, caring only that his course shall be *onward*, without a moment's consideration as to the direction in which it leads. Many a young man might have escaped bankruptcy, by a single evening of calm reflection upon the various causes of failure and success, and an impartial comparison of his actual, available *means*, with the ends which he proposed to accomplish; or by laying out his

whole plan of operation before an *experienced* and judicious friend, and abiding by his advice.

“Nothing venture, nothing have,” is a favourite maxim with sanguine young persons on their setting out in life; and upon the strength of this pernicious saw, we see young men going into business without any capital, and rivalling the most wealthy houses in the style of their stores, their scale of expenditure, and the adventurous character of their operations. If they were themselves to be the only losers by the result, their conduct would not be so unreasonable and criminal as it must appear, when we consider that the whole pecuniary loss occasioned by their failure will fall upon other people, the firm having nothing to lose but the shadow of a credit. Such conduct is little better than swindling.

A young man should not go into business without a solid capital, proportioned, upon just mercantile principles, to the proposed extent of his operations. The violation of this rule is little better than buying lottery tickets with borrowed money.

We would advise a young man to pass some years after the expiration of his apprenticeship, in the compting-room of a first-rate firm, in such a situation as will enable him to obtain a good insight into the principles upon which business is

conducted ; and to lay by his earnings carefully with a view to his own setting up in business. If he acquire some knowledge and some money each year till he is thirty years old, and then commence business, on a small capital of his own, with a good character for ability and integrity, his chance of ultimate success is greater than if he had set up at twenty-one without the confidence of the public, upon borrowed capital, or no capital.

Many persons appear to go into business without any just calculation of probable loss and gain—without any expectation of success upon an average profit. They expect that “*something will turn up*,” by which they may pocket great profits by a single operation, or a single series of operations. They go into business just to be in the arena where such things happen. They imagine that if they are among the number of merchants, they belong to that class of people who sometimes make fortunes, and peradventure they may make one by some lucky turn. It is true, their books show that they are hardly paying their way at present ; but they expect “*better times*.” At any rate, “it is best to be out in the field with their dish right-side up, so that if it should happen to rain roasted larks, they will come in for a good dinner.”

Now, this is not wise conduct. Wisdom, the schoolmen tell us, is the adaptation of adequate means to worthy ends. A man who enters upon commercial business, therefore, should not risk success upon uncertain contingencies. He should found his calculations upon the lowest estimate of profit and the worst expectation of "times." He should so arrange matters that he may be able to pay his way and save his capital and credit, in any times—in any state of general commercial stagnation. He should so adapt his means to the object in view, that he will be safe and not losing ground in any contingency. The lucky "turn up" is as likely to happen to the safe calculator as to the hardy adventurer, and on the supposition that it should not happen to either, one is secure while the other is sure ultimately to fail.

Do not be too ready to yield implicit credence to all you hear about the wonderful speculations performed by Mr. A. and Mr. B., and the short cuts to fortune made by Mr. C. and Mr. D. Live a year or two longer, and you may chance to see the names of all of them on the list of bankrupts. These stories of great fortunes, suddenly made, are frequently put forth for the express purpose of imposture. Many a person has thus been enabled to get extensive credits and effect



money-making failures. Do not believe any such story, unless you have an opportunity of knowing all the circumstances, and even then do not let it influence your own line of conduct with respect to your business. In a subsequent chapter, we shall say more on the subject of "speculation."

#### ORDER AND METHOD.

In entering upon business, it is necessary to pay strict attention to order and method.

Order and method appear synonymous terms, but, in strict propriety, have very distinct significations. *Order*, implying the arrangement of *things*: *Method*, denoting the regularity of *actions*. Articles may be placed in order, and disposed in the least possible space, or placed in the best possible arrangement; but this disposition may be performed in several different ways, methodically or unmethodically. *Method* implies that the operation of adjusting such articles, was the most expeditious, neat and judicious that could have been adopted. Order, saves space: method, saves time.

The advantages of order and method may be illustrated by a variety of instances. Take a familiar example. Throw into a trunk, various articles, promiscuously mingled: fill every part as closely and as fully as possible, till pressure

and sight convince you, that by this mode the trunk can hold no more. Now by this plan can you hope to remember the station each article occupies ?

But unpack the contents of the trunk, empty it, and replace the articles with regularity, piece by piece, in distinct rows, and adapted to the corners and vacancies as they occur,—you will soon perceive that the whole package will not only occupy considerably less space, but that you will with facility recollect the situation of each article.

Similar is the principle upon which order and method confer benefit, to whatever purpose they are applied : in the arrangement of time, money ; in the regulation of ideas, and in the modes of acquiring knowledge, in all its branches of arts, sciences, and literature.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF TIME.

“ Let every hour bring its occupation, and every occupation have its hour,” was the admirable maxim of that great moralist, Dr. Johnson. To which may be added the well-known adage, attributed to the celebrated De Wit, “ Do but one thing at a time.”

The axiom of the English moralist carries its meaning on its surface ; but it is impossible for any one, who has not made the experiment, to

conceive the immense advantage of this appropriation of time. This is the age of experiment, and therefore a request for one to be made, may safely be risked.

Let any individual earnestly desirous of doing something, which in his present state of desultory occupation he deems it impossible to complete, calculate what number of hours the desired work will require. This computation will not prove by any means so difficult as it may at first view appear. It is only necessary to discover what can be effected in one hour, and multiply that hour by the several divisions of the work that can be effected in it. Next, must be run over in thought the successive occupation of the unregulated day.

Without stopping to smile at his surprise on the discovery of the preponderance of idle to busy hours, let him simply proceed to appropriate to each *necessary* daily duty just as much time as each may require, but no more ; let him then give even a superabundant space for rest, and sleep, and meals. Yet after all these deductions, he will be astonished at the residue of leisure at his command.

In fact, it is only by appropriation that time has any value. For as Locke wisely asks,—What is time? Is it any thing that can be

grasped, pourtrayed, or in any other manner than by occupation possessed? Nay, can it be defined, but by the events by which it is marked? Divided by the alternations of light and darkness, by the changes perceptible in nature or ourselves, we conjure time into a real possession, when in fact it is a nonentity more utterly undefinable than any thought the mind can form.

The maxim of De Wit\* requires further comment, for it appears on the surface as a truism too palpable, and wholly unnecessary to be inculcated, since to do only one thing at a time is a matter of necessity. This great man, however, knew from experience its importance, and felt, from observation, the propriety of its diffusion. He accomplished so much in the twenty-four hours, that he was asked, by what secret art he completed what he undertook. Then it was that he answered, "I do but one thing at a time."

Those indulging themselves in desultory employment, passing from business to business with versatile and unfinishing eagerness, will quickly discover the worth of this maxim. Perpetually busy, harassed by numerous occupations, they fly from one to another, and though always em-

---

\* The celebrated minister, or pensionary of Holland, put to death 1672.

ployed, effect nothing. Affairs multiply rather than lessen beneath their assiduity ; for continually entering on new avocations, they neglect to complete those before commenced.

Thus wearied, embarrassed, and disheartened, they not unfrequently sink into quiescence and indolence, from utter hopelessness of extricating themselves from their multifarious undertakings.

But let them calmly obey the judicious mandate ; let them begin any one business, and steadily complete it, ere they pass to another ; let each affair in its due time be adjusted, and gradually the pressure complained of would cease.

Besides the time gained by arranging our hours to appointed duties, another advantage is thereby procured—the spirits are preserved cheerful, and free from irritation.

The consciousness that whatever ought to be done has its allotted period for performance, prevents any restless attempts at executing it at improper times, or any risk of neglecting it altogether. Leisure is consequently relished, without any harassing fear of its being improperly extended. The clock will remind us of the hour of business, till when we may enjoy the sweets of relaxation. By having such appointed periods of business and rest, we escape the irritating sensation of knowing there are duties to be performed,

without knowing when. Thus we taint leisure with the cares of business, and hurry business into fatigue.

The haste caused by procrastination is not the least mischievous or unpleasant result of unregulated activity. Avocations that would have afforded amusement, if performed in their right season, free from hurry and perturbation, by being deferred, enforce such precipitation (that haste may supply the omissions of punctuality), that they become actually tormenting; or by being performed slowly, at long intervals, prove wearying and disgusting.

The flushed cheek, the trembling hands, that accompany hurried employment, sufficiently express the painful disorder of the mind and feelings; as the listless yawn, and joyless assiduity, of those wearied by procrastinating slowness, evidence the cheerless lassitude of the tired spirits. Easy is the mode by which these minor but harassing vexations may be avoided—"Do one thing at once, and at its appointed time."

#### ARRANGEMENT OF MONEY DISBURSEMENTS.

The orderly arrangement of money disbursements, though deemed a lowly duty, is of the utmost consequence to all degrees of the commu-

nity, the rich and the poor, the noble and the ignoble.

The most considerable revenue may be rendered inadequate to the expenditure of its proprietor by mismanagement: for it is a self-evident proposition, that if disbursements exceed receipts, confusion and poverty must ensue. It matters not whether the receipts are hundreds, thousands, or millions; the rule equally applies to all. And to all there is but one preventive—order in regulating expenses, and adapting payments to the power of making them.

Again it is necessary, first to provide what is essential to comfort and decency, what is more immediately required by the individual, or what is in character with his rank, before unnecessary expenses are incurred. For if the limits of the income are faithfully observed, yet if that income is lavished on superfluities, the unnoticed claims of necessity will produce the horrors of want as surely, as if the limits of income had been at once outstepped, since it must come to that at last.

Thus, those who indulge in luxuries beyond their means, and gratify themselves with the embellishments and amusements of life, at the risk of resigning their comforts, and finding their actual wants unsupplied, are preparing for themselves the most painful form of poverty—poverty

embittered by former magnificence ; since a day of reckoning must sooner or later arrive, and the claims of nature cannot be set aside.

To avoid this distressing mistake, (for such folly is the effect of miscalculation, or of the neglect of all calculation,) there is a simple rule, to commence every year with making a computation of every *necessary* expense, of all that must be purchased, and then at one glance shall be seen what may be appropriated to superfluities. So much may be assigned for dress, so much for housekeeping, &c. &c. ; a dozen lines would comprise the whole statement.

#### DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS.

When your clear income, independent of what should be laid up for extraordinary emergencies, will admit of your supporting a wife and family ; it is wise and prudent to marry. But be careful to choose a wife upon more solid recommendations, than the beauty of her complexion, the sweetness of her voice, or even a distinguished air of fashion and “ton.” We do not approve the policy of deferring marriage till one is very rich ; and then selecting a wife by way of ornament to the establishment, as one would purchase any other expensive toy. No ; we are for early marriages, so they be prudent ; and on the sup-



position that a man is fairly able to support a wife, the prudence of the choice must be judged by the character of the woman selected. Good temper, and an affectionate disposition are important, inasmuch, as one does not feel comfortable with a fury, or a lump of animated ice about the house; but these are not the only requisites. A Merchant's wife should be economical, orderly in her household arrangements, *neat*, (look out for this particular, a dowdy will be a dowdy, even in thread lace and satins) cheerful, especially in hard times, and steady and firm in her disposition, so as to constitute the ornament of his prosperity, his sustainer in difficulties, and the very ark of his temporal salvation, when reverses come upon him like the waters of a great flood. An extravagant wife is an injury to a merchant's credit. An estimable and respected wife and a well ordered domestic establishment, hospitable and social without ostentation or extravagance, not only conduce to the merchant's every-day comfort, but it may conciliate the very friends and supporters who would be disgusted and repelled by an affectation of aristocratic style, and the pompous nonsense of high life.

## CHOICE OF A PARTNER.

As a general rule, I think it well to avoid partnerships. My reason for this is the same, that would influence me in declining to go into business on borrowed capital, or on promises of patronage; viz. that one is more likely to learn self-dependence by being alone and relying on his individual exertions and character. If you have the advantage of your partner's virtues and abilities in the firm, you have also the disadvantage of his faults. If you gain the support of his friends, you also incur the hostility of his enemies. In short, he becomes a sort of wife to you, and you are thus liable to all the inconveniences of a sort of double personal identity, without the circumstances which render this sort of intimate connexion so agreeable in the other case.

## CHARACTER THE CHIEF ELEMENT OF CREDIT.

It must never be forgotten that character is the main element of credit. The following anecdote, given by Mr. Walker, is in point.

"I owe my success in business chiefly to you," said a stationer to a paper-maker, as they were settling a large account; "but let me ask how a man of your caution came to give credit so freely

to a beginner with my slender means?" "Because," replied the paper-maker, "at whatever hour in the morning I passed to my business, I always observed you without your coat at yours." I knew both parties. Different men will have different degrees of success, and every man must expect to experience ebbs and flows; but I fully believe that no one in this country, of whatever condition, who is really attentive, and what is of great importance, who lets it appear that he is so, can fail in the long run. Pretence is ever bad; but there are many who obscure their good qualities by a certain carelessness, or even an affected indifference, which deprives them of the advantages they would otherwise infallibly reap, and then they complain of the injustice of the world. The man, who conceals or disguises his merit, and yet expects to have credit for it, might as well expect to be thought clean in his person, if he chose to go covered with filthy rags. The world will not, and cannot in great measure, judge but by appearances, and worth must stamp itself, if it hopes to pass current even against baser metal.

#### SELF-DISCIPLINE.

In order to maintain the high standard of character we recommend, self-discipline is necessary.

Self-discipline is the regulation of the present with a view to the future; but unfortunately the temptations of the present generally prevail against advantages which are not present, and we content ourselves with deferring the execution of our resolves from occasion to occasion throughout our lives. It seems to us as if the first thing we ought to attend to was our physical state, or bodily health, and that every thing else would follow almost as a matter of course. We mean that sound state, which is equally removed from debility and feverish excitement, and the attainment of which implies the exercise of many virtues, whilst it is favourable to the development of many more. It is the character of the Christian religion to inculcate the practice of self-discipline to a much greater extent than was ever even thought of before, and the Christian religion is constantly represented by its earliest teachers as holding out perfect freedom to its disciples. It appears to us certain that the practice of its precepts is calculated to ensure the greatest quantity of happiness here, as well as hereafter, because, whilst it permits every rational enjoyment, it imposes restraint only in those things which are injurious. An individual who acted up to the rules of Christianity, could not but enjoy existence in the highest perfection of which it is capable. But

a degree of perseverance is necessary, to which few can bring themselves. It is not by violent efforts that a proper state can be attained, for they are never lasting. It is not by plunging into extremes that we can ensure our well being, for they defeat every object of living; but it is by a steady, temperate course, with a constant check upon ourselves even at the thought of evil. When we have gone wrong, we must get right by degrees, so as to acquire a new habit as we reform. A violent resolution is only made to be broken. A sudden start from the wrong to the right road, is followed by as sudden a start back again. It is necessary also in self-discipline, in order to make it effective and permanent, that it should be extended to all our actions and habits. It is the whole man that must be reformed, or there is no safety. There must be no reserves, no compromises, no granting ourselves, as it were, a lease of certain irregularities, with a determination to quit them at the expiration of a term. We must begin from the present, and go steadily on, watching ourselves unceasingly, making our aberrations daily less and less, and securing every advance by all the precautions in our power. We must never be too sure, which is the almost certain forerunner of a relapse; but must distrust our strength on every occasion of temptation, either of commission or omission.

ON CERTAIN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF  
COMMERCE.

WE had prepared a chapter on the elementary principles of commerce, when the eloquent address of Governor Everett, to the Mercantile Library Association, already quoted, fell into our hands. His remarks on the leading topics of accumulation, property, capital and credit, are so just and so happily expressed, that we have displaced our own more crude observations to make room for those of so eminent an authority.

## ACCUMULATION.

“Some attempts have been made of late years to institute a comparison between what have been called the producing and the accumulating classes, to the disadvantage of the latter. This view I regard as entirely erroneous. Accumulation is as necessary to farther production, as production is to accumulation; and especially is accumulation the basis of commerce. If every man produced, from day to day, just so much as was needed for the day’s consumption, there would of course be nothing to exchange; in other words, there would be no commerce. Such a state of things implies the absence of all civilization.

Some degree of accumulation was the dictate of the earliest necessity ; the instinctive struggle of man to protect himself from the elements and from want. He soon found—such is the exuberance of nature, such the activity of her productive powers, and such the rapid development of human skill—that a vast deal more might be accumulated than was needed for bare subsistence.

“This, however, alone did not create commerce. If all men accumulated equally and accumulated the same things, there would still be no exchanges. But it soon appeared, in the progress of social man, that no two individuals had precisely the same tastes, powers, and skill. One excelled in one pursuit, one in another. One was more expert as a huntsman, another as a fisherman ; and all found that, by making a business of some one occupation, they attained a higher degree of excellence than was practicable while each one endeavoured to do everything for himself. With this discovery, commerce began. The Indian, who has made two bows, or dressed two bear-skins, exchanges one of them for a bundle of dried fish or a pair of snow-shoes. These exchanges between individuals extend to communities. The tribes on the sea-shore exchange the products of their fishing for the game or the horses of the plains and hills. Each bar-

ters what it has in excess, for that which it cannot so well produce itself, and which its neighbours possess in abundance. As individuals differ in their capacities, countries differ in soil and climate; and this difference leads to infinite variety of fabrics and productions, artificial and natural. Commerce perceives this diversity, and organizes a boundless system of exchanges, the object of which is to supply the greatest possible amount of want and desire, and to effect the widest possible diffusion of useful and convenient products. The extent to which this exchange of products is carried in highly-civilized countries, is truly wonderful. There are probably few individuals in this assembly who took their morning's meal this day, without the use of articles brought from almost every part of the world. The table on which it was served was made from a tree which grew on the Spanish Main or one of the West-India islands, and it was covered with a tablecloth from St. Petersburg or Archangel. The tea was from China; the coffee from Java; the sugar from Cuba or Louisiana; the silver spoons from Mexico or Peru; the cups and saucers from England or France. Each of these articles was purchased by an exchange of other products—the growth of our own or foreign countries—collected and distributed by a succession of voyages,



often to the farthest corners of the globe. Without cultivating a rood of ground, we taste the richest fruits of every soil. Without stirring from our fireside, we collect on our tables the growth of every region. In the midst of winter, we are served with fruits that ripened in a tropical sun; and struggling monsters are dragged from the depths of the Pacific ocean to lighten our dwellings.

“As all commerce rests upon accumulation, so the accumulation of every individual is made by the exchanges of commerce to benefit every other. Until he exchanges it, it is of no actual value to him. The tiller of a hundred fields can eat no more, the proprietor of a cloth factory can wear no more, and the owner of a coal mine can sit by no hotter a fire, than his neighbours. He must exchange his grain, his cloth and his coal for some articles of their production, or for money, which is the representative of all other articles, before his accumulation is of service to him. The system is one of mutual accommodation. No man can promote his own interest without promoting that of others. As in the system of the universe every particle of matter is attracted by every other particle, and it is not possible that a mote in a sunbeam should be displaced without producing an effect on the orbit

of Saturn, so the minutest excess or defect in the supply of any one article of human want, produces an effect—though of course an insensible one—on the exchanges of all other articles. In this way that Providence which educes the harmonious system of the heavens out of the adjusted motions and balanced masses of its shining orbs, with equal benevolence and care furnishes to the countless millions of the human family, through an interminable succession of exchanges, the supply of their diversified and innumerable wants.

#### PROPERTY.

“In order to carry on this system of exchanges, it is necessary that the articles accumulated should be safe in the hands of their owners. The laws of society for the protection of property were founded upon the early and instinctive observation of this truth. It was perceived, in the dawn of civilization, that the only way in which man could elevate himself from barbarism and maintain his elevation, was by being secured in the possession of that which he had saved from daily consumption ; this being his resource for a time of sickness, for old age, and for the wants of those dependent upon him ; as well as the fund out of which, by a system of mutually bene-

ficial exchanges, each could contribute to the supply of the wants of his fellow-men. To strike at the principle which protects his earnings or his acquisitions,—to destroy the assurance that the field which he has enclosed and planted in his youth will remain for the support of his advanced years, that the portion of its fruits which he does not need for immediate consumption will remain a safe deposit, under the protection of the public peace—is to destroy the life-spring of civilization. The philosophy that denounces accumulation, is the philosophy of barbarism. It places man below the condition of most of the native tribes on this continent. No man will voluntarily sow that another may reap. You may place a man in a paradise of plenty on this condition, but its abundance will ripen and decay unheeded. At this moment, the fairest regions of the earth—Sicily, Turkey, Africa, the loveliest and most fertile portions of the East, the regions that, in ancient times, after feeding their own numerous and mighty cities, nourished Rome and her armies—are occupied by oppressed and needy races, whom all the smiles of heaven and the bounties of the earth cannot tempt to strike a spade into the soil, farther than is requisite for a scanty supply of necessary food. On the contrary, establish the principle that property is safe,

that a man is secure in the possession of his accumulated earnings, and he creates a paradise on a barren heath ; alpine solitudes echo to the lowing of his herds ; he builds up his dykes against the ocean and cultivates a field beneath the level of its waves ; and exposes his life fearlessly in sickly jungles and among ferocious savages. Establish the principle that his property is his own, and he seems almost willing to sport with its safety. He will trust it all in a single vessel, and stand calmly by while she unmoors for a voyage of circumnavigation around the globe. He knows that the sovereignty of his country accompanies it with a sort of earthly omnipresence, and guards it as vigilantly, in the loneliest island of the Antarctic sea, as though it were locked in his coffers at home. He is not afraid to send it out upon the common pathway of the ocean, for he knows that the sheltering wings of the law of nations will overshadow it there. He sleeps quietly, though all that he has is borne upon six inches of plank on the bosom of the unfathomed waters ; for even if the tempest should bury it in the deep, he has assured himself against ruin, by the agency of those institutions which modern civilization has devised for the purpose of averaging the losses of individuals upon the mass.

## CAPITAL.

“It is usual to give the name of capital to those accumulations of property which are employed in carrying on the commercial as well as the other business operations of the community. The remarks already made will enable us to judge, in some degree, of the reasonableness of those prejudices which are occasionally awakened at the sound of this word. Capital is property which a man has acquired by his industry, or has, under the law of the land, become possessed of in some other way; and which is invested by him in that form and employed in that manner which best suit his education, ability, and taste. No particular amount of property constitutes capital. In a highly prosperous community, the capital of one man, like the late baron Rothschild at London, or of Stephen Girard at Philadelphia, may amount to eight or ten millions; the capital of his neighbour may not exceed as many dollars. In fact, one of these two extraordinary men and the father of the other passed from one extreme to the other in this scale of prosperity; and the same law which protected their little pittance at the outset,

protected the millions amassed by their perseverance, industry, and talent.

“Considering capital as the mainspring of the business operations of civilized society—as that which, diffused in proportionate masses, is the material on which enterprise works and with which industry performs its wonders, equally necessary and in the same way necessary for the construction of a row-boat and an Indiaman, a pair of shoes and a railroad—I have been at some loss to account for the odium which at times has been attempted to be cast on capitalists as a class; and particularly for the contrast in which capital has been placed with labour, to the advantageous employment of which it is absolutely essential.

“I have supposed that some part of this prejudice may arise from the traditions of other times and the institutions of other countries. The roots of opinion run deep into the past. The great mass of property in Europe, at the present day, even in England, is landed property. This property was much of it wrested from its original owners by the ancestors of its present possessors, who overran the countries with military violence and despoiled the inhabitants of their possessions; or still worse, compelled them to labour as slaves on the land they had once owned and tilled as

free men. It is impossible that an hereditary bitterness should not have sprung out of this relation never to be mitigated, particularly where the political institutions of society remain upon a feudal basis. We know from history, that after the Norman invasion, the Saxon peasantry, reduced to slavery, were compelled to wear iron collars about their necks like dogs, with the names of their masters inscribed upon them. At what subsequent period, from that time to this, has anything occurred to alleviate the feelings growing out of these events? Such an origin of the great mass of the property must place its proprietors in some such relation to the rest of the community, as that which exists between the Turks and Rayas in the Ottoman empire, and may have contributed to produce an hereditary hostility on the part of the poor toward the rich, among thousands who know not historically the origin of the feeling.

“It is obvious that the origin of our political communities and the organization of society among us, furnish no basis for a prejudice of this kind against capital. Wealth in this country may be traced back to industry and frugality; the paths which lead to it are open to all; the laws which protect it are equal to all; and such is the joint operation of the law and the customs

of society, that the wheel of fortune is in constant revolution, and the poor in one generation furnish the rich of the next. The rich man, who treats poverty with arrogance and contempt, tramples upon the ashes of his father or his grandfather; the poor man who nourishes feelings of unkindness and bitterness against wealth, makes war with the prospects of his children and the order of things in which he lives.

“A moment’s consideration will show the unreasonableness of a prejudice against capital, for it will show that it is the great instrument of the business movements of society. Without it there can be no exercise on a large scale of the mechanic arts, no manufactures, no private improvements, no public enterprises of utility, no domestic exchanges, no foreign commerce. For all these purposes a twofold use of capital is needed. It is necessary that a great many persons should have a portion of capital; as for instance, that the fisherman should have his boat; the husbandman his farm, his buildings, his implements of husbandry, and his cattle; the mechanic his shop and his tools; the merchant his stock in trade. But these small masses of capital are not alone sufficient for the highest degree of prosperity. Larger accumulations are wanted to keep the smaller capitals in steady movement



and to circulate their products. If manufactures are to flourish, a very great outlay in buildings, fixtures, machinery, and power, is necessary. If internal intercourse is to diffuse its inestimable moral, social and economical blessings through the land, canals, railroads and steamboats are to be constructed at vast expense. To effect these objects, capital must go forth like a mighty genius, bidding the mountains to bow their heads and the valleys to rise, the crooked places to be straight and the rough places plain. If agriculture is to be perfected, costly experiments in husbandry must be instituted by those who are able to advance and can afford to lose the funds which are required for the purpose. Commerce, on a large scale, cannot flourish without resources adequate to the construction of large vessels, and their outfit for long voyages and the exchange of valuable cargoes. The eyes of the civilized world are intently fixed upon the experiments now making to navigate the Atlantic by steam. It is said that the Great Western was built and fitted out at an expense of near half a million of dollars. The success of the experiment will be not more a triumph of genius and of art than of capital. The first attempts at the whale-fishery in Massachusetts were made from the South Shore and the island of Nantucket, by persons

who went out in small boats, killed their whale, and returned the same day. This limited plan of operations was suitable for the small demands of the infant population of New-England. But the whales were soon driven from the coast; the population increased, and the demand for the product of the fisheries proportionably augmented. It became necessary to apply larger capitals to the business. Whale-ships were now fitted out at considerable expense, which pursued this adventurous occupation from Greenland to Brazil. The enterprise thus manifested awoke the admiration of Europe, and is immortalized in the well-known description by Burke. But the business has grown, until the ancient fishing-grounds have become the first stations on a modern whaling voyage; and capitals are now required sufficient to fit out a vessel for an absence of forty months and a voyage of circumnavigation. Fifty thousand dollars are invested in a single vessel; she doubles Cape Horn, ranges from New South Shetland to the coasts of Japan, cruises in unexplored latitudes, stops for refreshment at islands before undiscovered, and on the basis perhaps of the capital of an individual house in New-Bedford or Nantucket, performs an exploit which sixty or seventy years ago was thought a great object to be effected by the resources of the Brit-

ish government. In this branch of business, a capital of twelve or fifteen millions of dollars is invested.\* Its object is to furnish us a cheap and commodious light for our winter evenings. The capitalist, it is true, desires an adequate interest on his investment; but he can only get this by selling his oil at a price at which the public are able and willing to buy it. The "overgrown capitalist" employed in this business is an overgrown lamplighter. Before he can pocket his six-per-cent. he has trimmed the lamp of the cottager who borrows an hour from evening to complete her day's labour, and has lighted the taper of the pale and thought-worn student who is "outwatching the bear," over some ancient volume.

"In like manner the other great investments of capital—whatever selfish objects their proprietors may have—must, before that object can be attained, have been the means of supplying the demand of the people for some great article of necessity, convenience, or indulgence. This re-

---

\* A writer, who appears to understand the subject thoroughly, in an article in the *North American Review* for January, 1834, calculates that a capital of twelve millions of dollars is employed in carrying on the whale fishery, and that an amount of seventy millions of dollars is directly or remotely involved in it.

mark applies peculiarly to manufactures carried on by machinery. A great capital is invested in this form, though mostly in small amounts. Its owners no doubt seek a profitable return; but this they can attain in no other way than by furnishing the community with a manufactured article of great and extensive use. Strike out of being the capital invested in manufactures, and you lay upon society the burden of doing by hand all the work which was done by steam and water, by fire and steel; or it must forego the use of the articles manufactured. Each result would in some measure be produced. A much smaller quantity of manufactured articles would be consumed; that is, the community would be deprived of comforts they now enjoy, and those used would be produced at greater cost by manual labour. In other words, fewer people would be sustained, and those less comfortably and at greater expense. When we hear persons condemning accumulations of capital employed in manufactures, we cannot help saying to ourselves, is it possible that any rational man can desire to stop those busy wheels,—to paralyze those iron arms,—to arrest that falling stream, which works while it babbles? What is your object? Do you wish wholly to deprive society of the fruit of the industry of these inanimate

but untiring labourers? Or do you wish to lay on aching human shoulders the burdens which are so lightly borne by these patient metallic giants? \* Look at Lowell. Behold the palaces of her industry side by side with her churches and her school-houses, the long lines of her shops and warehouses, her streets filled with the comfortable abodes of an enterprising, industrious, and intelligent population. See her fiery Sampsons roaring along her railroad with thirty laden cars in their train. Look at her watery Goliaths, not wielding a weaver's beam like him of old, but giving motion to hundreds and thousands of spindles and looms. Twenty years ago, and two or three poor farms occupied the entire space within the boundaries of Lowell. Not more visibly, I had almost said not more rapidly, was the palace of Aladdin, in the Arabian tales, constructed by the genius of the lamp, than this noble city of the arts has been built by the genius of capital. This capital, it is true, seeks a moderate interest on the investment; but it is by furnishing to all who desire it the cheapest gar-

---

\* At the time this Address was delivered, I was unacquainted with the little work entitled "John Hopk ns's Notions on Political Economy," where the same comparison of machines to giants is very ingeniously pursued.

ment ever worn by civilized man. To denounce the capital which has been the agent of this wonderful and beneficent creation,—to wage war with a system which has spread and is spreading plenty throughout the country, what is it but to play in real life the part of the malignant sorcerer in the same eastern tale, who, potent only for mischief, utters the baleful spell which breaks the charm, heaves the mighty pillars of the palace from their foundation, converts the fruitful gardens back to their native sterility, and heaps the abodes of life and happiness with silent and desolate ruins?

“It is hardly possible to realize the effects on human comfort of the application of capital to the arts of life. We can fully do this, only by making some inquiry into the mode of living in civilized countries in the middle ages. The following brief notices from Mr. Hallam’s learned and judicious work, may give us some distinct ideas on the subject. Up to the time of queen Elizabeth in England, the houses of the farmers in that country consisted of but one story and one room. They had no chimneys. The fire was kindled on a hearth of clay in the centre, and the smoke found its way out through an aperture in the roof, at the door, and the openings at the side for air and light. The domestic

animals—even oxen—were received under the same roof with their owners. Glass windows were unknown except in a few lordly mansions, and in them they were regarded as moveable furniture. When the dukes of Northumberland left Alnwick castle to come to London for the winter, the few glass windows, which formed one of the luxuries of the castle, were carefully taken out and laid away, perhaps carried to London to adorn the city residence. The walls of good houses were neither wainscoted nor plaistered. In the houses of the nobility the nakedness of the walls was covered by hangings of coarse cloth. Beds were a rare luxury. A very wealthy individual would have one or two in his house : rugs and skins laid upon the floor were the substitute. Neither books nor pictures formed any part of the furniture of a dwelling in the middle ages ; as printing and engraving were wholly unknown, and painting but little practised. A few inventories of furniture dating from the fifteenth century are preserved. They afford a striking evidence of the want of comfort and accommodation in articles accounted by us among the necessities of life. In the schedule of the furniture of a signor Contarini, a rich Venetian merchant living in London in 1481, no chairs nor looking-glasses are named. Carpets were unknown at the same

period; their place was supplied by straw and rushes, even in the presence-chamber of the sovereign. Skipton castle, the principal residence of the earls of Cumberland, was deemed amply provided in having eight beds, but had neither chairs, glasses, nor carpets. The silver-plate of Mr. Fermor, a wealthy country gentleman at Easton, in the sixteenth century, consisted of sixteen spoons and a few goblets and ale-pots. Some valuations of stock-in-trade in England from the beginning of the fourteenth century, have been preserved. A carpenter's consisted of five tools, the whole valued at a shilling; a tanner's, on the other hand, amounted to near ten pounds, ten times greater than any other,—tanners being at that period principal tradesmen, as almost all articles of dress for men were made of leather.

“We need but contrast the state of things in our own time with that which is indicated in these facts, to perceive the all-important influence on human comfort of the accumulation of capital and its employment in the useful arts of life. As it is out of the question for the government to invest the public funds in the branches of industry necessary to supply the customary wants of men, it follows that this must be done by private resources and enterprise. The necessary consequence is, that the large capital required for these



operations must be furnished by the contributions of individuals, each possessing a portion of the stock, or by a single proprietor.

“It is rather remarkable that the odium, of which all capital in large masses has sometimes been the subject, should be directed more against the former,—namely, joint-stock companies,—than against large individual capitals. This, however, appears to be the fact. Some attempts have been made to organize public sentiment against associated wealth, as it has been called, without reflecting, as it would seem, that these associations are the only means by which persons of moderate property are enabled to share the profits of large investments. Were it not for these associations in this country, no pursuit could be carried on, except those within the reach of individual resources; and none but very rich persons would be able to follow those branches of industry, which now diffuse their benefits among persons of moderate fortune. In which part of this alternative a conformity with the genius of our political institutions exists, need not be laboured.

“But whether the masses of capital necessary to carry on the great operations of trade are derived from the association of several or from the exclusive resources of one, it is plain that the in-

terest of the capital, however formed, is identical with that of the community. Nobody hoards,—everything is invested or employed, and directly or indirectly is the basis of business operations.

“It is true that when one man uses the capital of another, he is expected to pay something for this privilege. But there is nothing unjust or unreasonable in this. It is inherent in the idea of property. It would not be property, if I could take it from you and use it as my own without compensation. That simple word, it is *mine*, carries with it the whole theory of property and its rights. If my neighbour has saved his earnings and built him a house with it, and I ask his leave to go and live in it, I ought in justice to pay him for the use of his house. If, instead of using his money to build a house in which he permits me to live, he loans me his money, with which I build a house for myself, it is equally just that I should pay him for the use of his money. It is his, not mine. If he allows me to use the fruit of his labour or skill, I ought to pay him for that use, as I should pay him if he came and wrought for me with his hands. This is the whole doctrine of interest. In a prosperous community, capital can be made to produce a greater return than the rate of interest fixed by law. The merchant who employs the whole of his

capital in his own enterprises and takes all the profit to himself, is commonly regarded as a useful citizen ; it would seem unreasonable to look with a prejudiced eye upon the capitalist, who allows all the profits of the business to accrue to others, asking only legal interest for his money, which they have employed.

“ Without, however, pursuing this comparison among different classes of capitalists, let us farther endeavour, by an example, to illustrate the question, whether they ought in any view to be regarded as exerting an unfriendly influence on the labours of the community. Take, for instance, such a case as Mr. Stephen Girard, a great capitalist, who united in his person the merchant and the banker, and who may be spoken of plainly, as he has passed away—the solitary man—and left no one to be grieved with the freedoms which are taken with his memory. This remarkable person began life without a farthing, and left behind him a property, whose actual value amounted to seven or eight millions of dollars, and this acquired in the latter half of his life. He told me himself, that at the age of forty, his circumstances were so narrow that he was employed as the commander of his own sloop, engaged in the coasting trade between New-York, or Philadelphia, and New-Orleans ;

adding, that on a certain occasion he was forty-five days in working his way up from the Balize to the city. Few persons, I believe, enjoyed less personal popularity in the community in which he lived, and to which he bequeathed his princely fortune. If this proceeded from defects of personal character, it is a topic which we have no occasion to discuss here. We are authorized only to speak of the effect upon the public welfare of the accumulation of such a fortune in one man's hands. While I am far from saying that it might not have been abused by being made the instrument of a corrupt and dangerous influence in the community, I have never heard that it was so abused by Mr. Girard; and, on general principles, it may perhaps be safely said that the class of men qualified to amass large fortunes by perseverance and exclusive devotion to business, by frugality and thrift, are not at all likely to apply their wealth to ambitious or corrupt designs. As to the effect in all other points of view, I confess I see nothing but public benefit in such a capital, managed with unrelaxing economy; one half judiciously employed by the proprietor himself in commerce; the other half loaned to the business community. What better use could have been made of it? Will it be said, divide it equally among the community; give

each individual in the United States a share? It would have amounted to half a dollar each for man, woman, and child; and, of course, might as well have been sunk in the middle of the sea. Such a distribution would have been another name for annihilation. How many ships would have furled their sails, how many warehouses would have closed their shutters, how many wheels, heavily laden with the products of industry, would have stood still, how many families would have been reduced to want, and without any advantage resulting from the distribution!

“Let me not be misunderstood. I regard equality of condition and fortune as the happiest state of society, and those political institutions as immeasurably the wisest and best, which tend to produce it. All laws which have for their object to perpetuate large estates and transmit them from generation to generation, are at war with the constitution of man. Providence has written a statute of distributions on the face of nature and the heart of man; and whenever its provisions are contravened by political enactments, a righteous conjuration to subvert them springs up in the very elements of our being. My proposition is only, that, in a country like this, where the laws forbid hereditary transmission and encourage equality of fortune, accumulations

of capital made by industry, enterprise, and prudence, employed in active investments, without ministering to extravagance and luxury, are beneficial to the public. Their possessor becomes, whether he wills it or not, the steward of others ; not merely, as in Mr. Girard's case, because he may destine a colossal fortune after his decease for public objects, but because, while he lives, every dollar of it must be employed in giving life to industry and employment to labour. Had Mr. Girard lived in a fashionable part of the city, in a magnificent house ; had he surrounded himself with a troop of liveried domestics ; had he dazzled the passers-by with his splendid equipages, and spread a sumptuous table for his " dear five hundred friends," he would no doubt have been a more popular man. But in my apprehension he appears to far greater advantage, as a citizen and a patriot, in his modest dwelling and plain garb, appropriating to his personal wants the smallest pittance from his princely income ; living to the last in the dark and narrow street in which he made his fortune, and when he died, bequeathing it for the education of orphan children. For the public, I do not know that he could have done better ; of all the men in the world he probably derived the least enjoyment from his property himself.

## CREDIT.

“I have left myself scarce any room to speak on the subject of credit. The legitimate province of credit is to facilitate and to diffuse the use of capital, and not to create it. I make this remark with care, because views prevail on this subject exaggerated and even false; which, carried into the banking system, have done infinite mischief. I have no wish whatever to depreciate the importance of credit. It has done wonders for this country. It has promoted public and private prosperity; built cities, cleared wildernesses, and bound the remotest parts of the continent together by chains of iron and gold. These are wonders, but not miracles; these effects have been produced not without causes. Trust and confidence are not gold and silver; they command capital, but they do not create it. A merchant in active business has a capital of twenty thousand dollars; his credit is good; he borrows as much more; but let him not think he has doubled his capital. He has done so only in a very limited sense. He doubles the sum on which for a time he trades; but he has to pay back the borrowed capital with interest; and that, whether his business has been prosperous or adverse. Still, I am not disposed to deny that, with extreme pru-

dence and good management, the benefit to the individual of such an application of credit is great ; and when individuals are benefited, the public is benefited. But no capital has been created. Nothing has been added to the pre-existing stock. It was in being—the fruit of former accumulation. If he had not borrowed it, it might have been used by its owner in some other way. What the public gains, is the superior activity that is given to business by bringing more persons, with a greater amount and variety of talent, into action.

“These benefits, public and private, are not without some counterbalancing risks ; and with the enterprising habits and ardent temperament of our countrymen, I should deem the formation of sound and sober views on the subject of credit, one of the most desirable portions of the young merchant’s education. The eagerness to accumulate wealth by trading on credit, is the disease of the age and country in which we live. Something of the solidity of our character and purity of our name has been sacrificed to it. Let us hope that the recent embarrassments of the commercial world will have a salutary influence in repressing this eagerness. The merchants of the country have covered themselves with lasting honour abroad, by the heroic fidelity with which



they have, at vast sacrifices, fulfilled their obligations. Let us hope that hereafter they will keep themselves more beyond the reach of the fluctuations in business and the vicissitudes of affairs."

#### PROFITS OF TRADE.

The average profits of commerce, as well as the profits of individual merchants, are generally much over-estimated. We have not statistics to enable us to correct this mistake with respect to our own country; but as we deem it very essential for our young merchant to entertain correct and sober views upon this point, we copy from an intelligent British writer, some excellent practical remarks on the average profits of capital employed in trade, with particular reference to that country, which, of all others, has been supposed to derive the greatest wealth from commerce.

"It is common to estimate the emolument of a wholesale business in Britain, in a small established concern, at 10 *per cent.* on the capital; moderate calculators will qualify this by calling it between 8 and 10 *per cent.*; but they who are at great pains to take every thing into the account, and to enumerate a variety of petty deductions which escape the sanguine reckoner, will find that in a large concern, 7 *per cent.* is in

general the extent of the *clear* earnings ; leaving only 2 *per cent.* above that which has been the current rate of interest during the last twenty-five years. Mercantile profits are subject to a variety of unforeseen deductions, originating partly in an accumulation of petty expenses, but more, at least in business of long credit, from deficient payments. The latter are technically called bad debts, and almost always exceed the anticipated amount, in consequence both of the sanguine temper of our countrymen, and of the actual capital of the buyers being much inferior to its appearance. Secrecy, both as to property and annual profit, is considered a first rate point among mercantile men ; to the latter there can be no objection, but the concealment of the amount of capital, and the almost invariable consequence, its exaggeration, is productive of very pernicious effects. It is founded partly on the general vanity, and more, perhaps, on an expectation of direct advantage from the command of credit. But were the practice of transacting with ready money to become general, a merchant would have no greater motive to be thought in affluence than an individual in any other line. Be this as it may, the fact is, that the clear profits of trade, whether home or foreign, whether mercantile or manufacturing, whether retail or whole-

sale, are greatly below what the world imagines. Many hold a contrary language with regard to trade in general, but few do so in respect to their own particular business. "Ours," they say, "is of limited emolument, but other lines are very different, inasmuch as they admit of speculation and of higher charges." Whoever takes the trouble to question men in almost any business or profession, may reckon on receiving a succession of such answers,—answers not suggested by a wish to deceive or to conceal the profits of the individual, but originating in the general disposition to take the *omne ignotum pro magnifico*. We dwell on this point from a desire to correct, as far as our influence goes, the prevalence of existing errors, and prepare our countrymen for the adoption of that patient and pains-taking course which was the basis of the prosperity of our ancestors, and which alone can extricate us from our present embarrassment. Some years ago, such language would not have been listened to; our minds were kept in a ferment by the fluctuations of war; property, whether in land, houses, or merchandize, had obtained an unexampled value; the majority of the possessors considered themselves the masters of assured fortunes, and never doubted that the general enhancement was an evidence of augmented national wealth.

Now that we have gained every political object, and that we know to our cost how far we are from enjoying internal prosperity, we are more disposed to give attention to the monitor who recalls the almost antiquated maxims of industry and economy, and who tells us, that, though we surpass our neighbours in activity and combination, we have much to learn from them, both in point of caution in enterprise, and of moderation in expenditure.

We are next to see how far these opinions are supported by official documents. The returns for the property-tax have of late afforded considerable means of ascertaining the circumstances of persons engaged in trade. If it be objected that many persons have not made a fair return, we may rejoin that, on the other hand, a number chose to conceal their disappointments from the world, and to pay the tax on an income they had not realized. The total number of *families* deriving an income from trade, manufacture, and professions, in England, Wales, and Scotland, is about 160,000 :

120,000 of these returned their incomes under 150*l.* a-year :

40,000 were above 150*l.* a-year ; and of these 3800 declared their income to exceed 1000*l.* a-year.

Now, let any of our readers compare this

statement with their previous ideas of the mercantile wealth of Great Britain, and they will bring to mind, if we are not much mistaken, an impression that the number of rich merchants throughout the empire greatly exceeded 3800. The total sum paid as property-tax under the head of the "profits of trade, manufactures, and professions," for 1814, was somewhat under 3½ millions, a sum certainly not to be paralleled in any other country, but falling considerably below the anticipation of Mr. Pitt when he first introduced the income-tax so long ago as 1798.

We have naturally a strong disposition to contemplate the past or the distant through a magnifying medium, and to believe whatever the confident assertions of others, or the love of wonder in ourselves, suggests with regard to reported wealth. Hence the allegations so confidently brought forward in regard to the riches of ancient cities; hence the notion generally entertained with respect to the rapidity of fortune-making in our foreign settlements. India has long been proverbial in this respect, and it requires much more than the usual stock of information to discover, that if we make allowance for deaths and disappointments from various causes, the proportion of those who succeed in that country is *not greater than at home*; and

that a fortune, when it does happen to be made, is the result of the length of time, of a habit of saving favoured by exemption from the expense of a family, of rare political contingencies, or, finally, of unusual opportunities consequent on the mortality of competitors. In point of trade few countries are more limited than India. In the West Indies, the field of industry is wider, particularly for planters; but the ratio of emolument has certainly not been greater, taking the whole of the last twenty years together, than in Great Britain. In support of these assertions, we appeal not to the young beginner, entering with sanguine hopes on his career, nor even to him who is advanced half-way in the eager pursuit, but to all who have passed *a length of years in these countries*, and who possess a sufficient share of reflection to turn their experience to account, by making a deliberate survey between the mother-country and her settlements. Particular instances may be given of the acquisition of mercantile fortunes even in the last ten or twelve years, partly in India, and partly in Canada; but these have been rare, and the result of peculiar circumstances. Equal judgment and exertion have certainly been possessed by many merchants in the West India, American, and Continental branches; yet, we believe, that the

whole list of these houses may be fairly challenged for an example of the *rapid* acquisition of fortune since the peace of Amiens.

Another point in which a similar delusion prevails, relates to the effects of war, particularly that of 1793; a war in which we still believe ourselves, and are believed by foreigners, to have engrossed and absorbed the commerce of the world. A reference, however, to official documents will show that the exports and imports of the most boasted years of the war in question, were below the peace year 1802, and even below those of our late years of suffering. The flag of our enemies was indeed expelled from the Ocean, but the greater proportion of trade passed into the hands of neutrals; and, when in 1808, we took it out of their possession, we were taught, by dear-bought experience, that war, under any circumstances, is adverse to commerce.

These observations must be understood not as intended to depreciate the value of commerce, or to damp the hopes of eventual success. They show, indeed, that the *ratio* of profit is generally small; but they afford the consolatory assurance that mercantile concerns may be carried to a great extent, and that the amount of gain may, in process of time, be rendered very considerable. This leads us to advert to a matter of great in-

terest to us as we now stand, relatively to the rival countries of the Continent. It is a maxim, that commercial establishments, whether in the mercantile or manufacturing line, should be confined to a few objects, and conducted on a large scale. It is by this only that the task of individuals can be simplified; that employment can be subdivided; that work can be put quickly through hands, or that we can provide on the spot a supply of the various and indispensable requisites of business. A large establishment affords the means of employment to every kind of capacity; in fact, the duty is so facilitated as to become, in many cases, a mere routine; while the more intelligent and active workmen act as superintendents, the mass of the unambitious and unthinking are occupied with the detail. It is owing to this process of subdivision, and to the relative magnitude of the London workshops, that many articles can be supplied in our metropolis as cheaply as in the provincial towns, where labour is 40 *per cent.* lower: the same rule accounts for the charge on the transaction of business by merchants, accountants, attorneys, notaries, and agents, being less heavy than might be apprehended from the enormous expense of living in London. Similar results take place in regard to manufacture in favour of such towns as Bir-



mingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds ; and it is to this, more than to any other cause, that we owe our ability to compete with the cheaper labour of the Continent.

#### ON SPECULATION.

This analysis of the profit of trade leads us to say a few words on a topic which has hitherto been very generally misunderstood ; we mean the profits of speculation. That term is confined, by politico-economical writers, to the purchase of an article at a given time, with profit. Among men of business, however, this expression has a much more extended signification, and is applied, generally, to incurring extensive hazards of any kind in the hope of extensive emolument ; in short, to whatever is foreign to the proper business of the individual, or beyond the control of common rules. It is to such undertakings that vulgar credulity ascribes extraordinary profits ; and even well informed men are apt to give way to the assertions so confidently made, of vast occasional gains in this line of business. Dr. Smith himself, after remarking (*Wealth of Nations*, Book I. chap. 10.), that to make a fortune in a regular line commonly requires a long life of industry and frugality, adds, no doubt on the faith of repeated assurances from mercantile friends, that

there are many examples of fortunes realized by speculators in the course of a few years. Now, the men who embark in speculation are, in general, very loose accountants; their estimate of profits applies to the *gross*, never to the *nett* return; besides, they are almost always adventurers, and adventurers have seldom been noted for the observance of truth. Their favourite season of activity is a time when the sudden stoppage of ordinary intercourse causes a rapid fluctuation in the prices of commodities, and when the regular merchants withdraw from the scene. Now, what sober estimate can be formed of loss or gain in such a chaos? Add to this that these men trade almost always on credit, and need all the support which flattering representations, and rumours of sudden profit, can give them. All these reasons seem to justify a deliberate inquirer in doing what is very seldom done in such occasions, we mean in withholding his belief from the confident allegations of speculators, so long as they are not supported by collateral evidence.

Our opinion is, that, instead of the large profits commonly ascribed to this course of trade, it will be found that the individuals concerned in it experience little else than disappointments, and maintain a perpetual struggle to keep up a fair

appearance to the world. This opinion is founded partly on a knowledge of the actual career and circumstances of speculators, but more on the well-known fact, that almost every line of business is in the hands of established merchants, who, of course, are too vigilant to overlook the opportunity of emolument, and who have much better means of information than temporary interlopers. Still, should there remain doubts as to the accuracy of our opinion, the question may be brought to a point by a reference to the account-books of any given number of celebrated speculators: their affairs end almost always in bankruptcy; their papers continue open to access for years in the hands of their solicitors or assignees; and we are much mistaken if an inspection of them would show, in one case out of ten, that the parties had at any period succeeded in making their boasted profits.

We have been induced to dwell the more on the boasts of speculators, because they are productive of the greatest mischief in unsettling persons in business, particularly young men, and in making them look on their proper line with comparative contempt. It would be endless to attempt an enumeration of the various ways in which the rage for speculation has brought misfortune on merchants and manufacturers. The

opening of a new country, such as Buenos Ayres, Brazil, or Caraccas, has led to the export not only of a prodigious over-stock of merchandize fitted for the country, but of many articles totally unsuited to the climate and habits of the people.\*

Again, when the late general war was drawing to a close, goods, both colonial and manufactured, were poured into the Continent of Europe, as if the market were inexhaustible, and as if the calamities of war had produced no decrease of disposable capital. At home, also, vast sums have been lavished in buildings, in mines, manufactories, and other establishments which never had a fair prospect of success, and owed their origin to the sanguine imagination of one projector, and the credulity of another.

The result of all this is, that hitherto our trading concerns have been very frequently mismanaged; that a great deal of property has been wasted by the inexperienced and sanguine; and

---

\* Elegant services of cut glass were sent out to men accustomed to drink out of a horn or a cocoa-nut shell; skates were forwarded to a country where ice was unknown; and tools with a hatchet on one side, and a hammer on the other, to break the rocks, and cut the precious metals from them, as if the inhabitant had merely to go to the mountains, and cut down gold and silver by wholesale. — *Mawe's Travels to Brazil*.

that those who really expect to succeed in business must lay their account with submitting not only to a deal of labour, but of self-denial, in resisting the temptation of flattering projects, out of their own line. What a beneficial result would be produced were young merchants to adopt it as a rule not to listen to the ardent suggestions of persons of their own time of life, but to recur, on every question of consequence, to the advice of their seniors; of men who have had to make their own way in the world, and who, without perhaps possessing the advantage of education, or the talent of moulding their reasoning into the form of general principles, will still be found safe counsellors in the practical part of the business. If the result of their admonitions be to abridge some of the pleasing illusions of the mercantile beginner, is it not better that the true nature of his prospects should be made known to him in the early part of life? A deduction from anticipated enjoyment is a trifling sacrifice in comparison with the distress produced by failure in latter years, when the individual is less able to contend with difficulty, and has probably to provide for a family. Let any one extensively acquainted with mercantile men, call to recollection the situation of the majority of his personal friends during the last

twenty years, and say, whether any degree of self-denial would not be preferable to that succession of disappointments, anxieties, and losses, which have baffled the exertions and broken the spirits of so many meritorious persons.

The country in which trade has shone forth in all its splendour, where it has been cultivated without the support of arms or prohibitory regulations, where, in short, it has developed its beneficent tendency in all its extent, is Holland. If we look to the early enterprises of the Dutch, we find them enabled by the power of their productive industry to assert their independence at home, and to assail their enemies in the remotest part of their empire. The Portuguese in the east, and the Spaniards in the west, were each found unequal to the task of resisting these Republicans: a proud stand was made by them against the navy of England, and they did not fall into despair even when assailed by their forces in conjunction with those of France. Afterwards, when restored to British alliance, and when they concurred and co-operated with Great Britain in the great struggle against Louis XIV., it is surprising how large a proportion both of troops and subsidies was furnished by this apparently inconsiderable state. "No country," says Sir William Temple, "can be found where

so vast a trade has been managed, yet the inhabitants have no native commodities towards building vessels, and hardly any that are considerable for traffic with their neighbours. Holland is grown rich by force of industry, by improvement and manufacture of foreign growths." Proceeding to specify more particularly the causes of this mercantile prosperity, Sir William enumerates "the easy communication of water, particularly by the Rhine and Maese; the security of property; the undisturbed liberty of conscience, and the progressive influx of people persecuted for their religious opinions in Flanders, England, France, and Germany." Such were the original causes; those of subsequent operation were the "general habit of industry and economy; the formation of canals; the institution of Banks; the low interest of money; the exemption of trade from imposts; the appropriation of particular towns to particular branches of business; application to the fisheries, and (what he regrets much should not exist in England) the practice of keeping an official register of all purchases of property;" a practice introduced into Holland and Flanders in the reign of Charles V. to the incalculable convenience and security of money transactions.

## THE MERCHANT'S DUTIES.

THE views which we have already expressed in relation to the great importance of commerce and its beneficial influence on the welfare of society, lead to the interesting conclusion that this useful pursuit is not only consistent with the benevolent views of Providence towards man, but that it grows and prospers under his special favour ; and that it is destined always to perform an important part in the amelioration of the condition and prospects of mankind.

## PURPOSES OF COMMERCE.

The leading purposes which trade and commerce, and consequently every business and profession which exists by being subsidiary to them, appear destined by the will of Providence to answer, are, to promote the cultivation of the earth ; to call forth into use its hidden treasures ; to excite and sharpen the inventive industry of man ; to unite the whole human race in bonds of fraternal connection ; to augment their comforts and alleviate their wants by an interchange of commodities superfluous to the original possessors ; to open a way for the progress of civilization, for the diffusion of learning, for the extension of sci-



ence, for the reception of Christianity ; and thus to forward that ultimate end, to which all the designs and dispensations of God, like rays converging to a central point, seem evidently directed, the increase of the sum of general happiness.

#### UNLAWFUL TRAFFIC.

From the observations which have been already made respecting the duty of individuals on the subject of commerce, the following general rules may be deduced. First: that no man stands authorized in the sight of his Maker to enter into, or to continue in, any species of traffic or business, which is either in itself unjust or immoral, or which in any way tends on the whole to impair the happiness of the human race. And secondly: that every merchant is bound, in following his occupation, to extend his views beyond his own emolument and advantage ; and to conduct it on such principles, and to direct it, as far as may be possible, to such objects, as to advance the comforts, the prosperity, the intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, of his dependants, of his neighbours, of his countrymen, and, if his line of life enables him, of foreign nations, even in the remotest corners of the globe.

## COMPETITION.

He who is engaged in any kind of trade or business, has usually to contend with a multitude of competitors. Let his competition be open, fair, and amicable ; not tricking, ungenerous, and malevolent. Let it be displayed, not in depreciating the skill, or in vilifying the character, of a rival ; but in laudable efforts to gain an honest pre-eminence by superior attention, knowledge, diligence, and activity ; by applying greater industry and discernment in choosing situations, in the purchase of raw materials or manufactures, in making improvements, in conjecturing the probable consumption, in calculating risks, in taking fit precautions against accidents and bad debts, in meeting the wishes and suiting the convenience of customers and employers ; in short, in every upright and becoming way, which may enable one man to transact business, or to sell commodities, on more moderate and acceptable terms than another.

In the course of this competition, the most satisfactory method by which a person may try the propriety of his conduct towards his brother-traders in any particular instance, is by referring to that fundamental rule of Christian morality, which directs him to act towards another, as he

would think it reasonable for that person, under similar circumstances, to act towards himself. This is indeed a rule of universal application to every pecuniary and mercantile transaction. Let the borrower and the lender, the purchaser and the seller, the agent and the principal, the banker and the person who deposits money in his hands, respectively conceive themselves to have changed places. Let each ask himself what proceedings he should deem, in his new situation, equitable and kind on the part of the other; and he will rarely be mistaken in determining what equity and kindness require from himself.

#### REGULATION OF PROFITS.

The profits of trade and business are to be considered as a fair compensation for the labour, industry, and skill bestowed upon them, and for the use and risk of the capital employed. Of these particulars the general experience of the trading world may be expected to form a truer estimate than the solitary judgment of an individual. And on this principle the market price at which an article is sold, and the customary terms on which a branch of business is transacted, may commonly be presumed to be fair and reasonable, and proper to be adopted, at least by the young beginner, who may easily be mis-

led in his calculations, by not having yet experienced the various hazards and losses which will be discovered in winding up commercial dealings; unless they are known to be kept up by combinations and other unwarrantable practices, or some alteration, by which the article is cheapened, has taken place. Except in cases of this nature, a young merchant who lowers the current prices may be suspected of too great eagerness for custom. Yet an intelligent and conscientious merchant, aware of the temptations to which he and his brethren are exposed, of exacting exorbitant gain from the public, will scrupulously investigate the nature of his business, and will strive to conduct his dealings on the lowest terms which, if permanently adopted, would afford him a sufficient, but not an immoderate profit; instead of implicitly following the rates and prices taken by others in the same line with himself. The terms, it is said, ought to be the lowest which can be *permanently* afforded. This expression is used both as conveying a direction which seems to be just, and for the purpose of stigmatizing the conduct of those adventurers, who endeavour to draw customers to their counting-house, or their shop, by dazzling them with flattering terms and accommodations which are not meant to be continued; or who transact some part of their busi-

ness, or dispose of some particular article, at a losing price, as a lure to the unwary ; while they more than repay themselves by unsuspected and exorbitant profits on other branches of their trade.\* It commonly happens to persons of this description, that the bubble breaks on which they relied ; and that numbers, more honest than themselves, are involved in their fall. Even if they prosper for a time, they are usually detected at last : and whether successful or not, they ought to be exposed to contempt, as convicted of tricking and underhand proceedings, and as bringing a general suspicion on the character of traders. It must, however, be admitted, that in some trades custom seems to have established a losing or nearly losing price on certain articles,

---

\* Frauds of the latter kind are frequently practised by retail shop-keepers. Thus, sugar is sometimes sold at an under rate, merely to gain custom for tea, which is sold far more than proportionally too dear ; or great bargains are allowed in ribands and gauzes, with a view to allure purchasers for silks and laces at an exorbitant price. In such cases it is often contrived that the cheap article shall be one of trifling worth, and one the value of which is well known ; while the dear article is of an opposite description. When the bait has taken, the price of the cheaper commodity is commonly raised, or one of inferior worth is substituted in its place. Shops of this sort are usually called *cheap shops*.

which is compensated by as customary a high profit on others necessarily sold at the same shop. In these cases, though the mode of proceeding in question is very undesirable, on account of the temptations with which it is accompanied, the merchant may find it nearly impossible entirely to avoid it. But let him beware that his gains be not on the whole excessive. It should be remembered, that the temptations relating to the price of articles, and the terms of doing business, vary in different periods of a merchant's life. He who at his outset in the world is disposed to reduce the current rates with the view of supplanting established merchants, is in danger, when he has got business into his own hands, of erring on the contrary side. Young merchants may require to be guarded against lowering prices; established merchants against upholding them; and both against vilifying and censuring each other.

The natural tendency of moderate profits is to render all articles more easily attainable, both at home and abroad, to all classes of society; and among the rest to the poor, whose benefit ought to be studied in the first place; as in every community, they form the great mass of the people. This effect the competition of trade would uniformly produce, if it were left to take a free course. But a contrary system is too often pur-

sued by means of monopolies and combinations. The constant tendency of monopolies is to raise the rate of transacting business, and the price of commodities, to an unnatural height. The tendency of combinations is the same: for, though on incidental occasions there may be a confederation of purchasers against a seller; yet even then the usual purport and consequence of the combination is to gain profit at the expense of a particular individual, not to reduce the general value of the article. It is a fortunate circumstance that all these schemes, which are repugnant to the just principles of commerce, though they may sometimes promote a private and temporary interest at the expense of public good, frequently terminate to the detriment of the projectors. The monopolist has not seldom been brought to ruin by the sudden disuse of the article which he has bought up; or by the discovery of some fresh source from which it may be procured, or of some substitute which may be employed in its place. The associates in a combination have also found that they have overreached themselves; that their project has failed; and that they have lost the substantial and honourable profit, which they would have obtained, had they been contented not to grasp at extravagant and unjust advantages. Add to this, that

they are liable to be opposed and thwarted by counter-combinations ; and that if any individual, with an adequate capital, should stand forward to resist them, he is almost certain to carry away the public favour, and triumph in reputation and emolument ; while they are disappointed of their expected gains, and marked with indelible disgrace. Besides, fraudulent men are rarely true to each other. Each suspects the artifices of his neighbour, and hastens to be beforehand with him. In fact it generally proves, though the circumstance may not be publicly known, that the terms of the engagement are privately broken by some of the associates. Or the effects of the contract are done away by entering into a competition in practices, perhaps, in bad practices, which it has not forbidden. A number of proprietors of lime-works, for instance, enter into a mutual agreement not to sell their lime under a certain price. But their rivalry remains the same. A contention instantly takes place, diminishing the profits of their league, though beneficial to the public ; a contention who shall burn his lime the best, who shall make the shortest and easiest roads to his kiln, who shall afford the greatest accommodations to his customers ; and, ere long, each of them is occupied in the less creditable employment of traversing the country.



far and wide for the purpose of traducing his confederates and recommending himself, at a sacrifice, perhaps of expense and time, by no means compensated by the advantages which he derives from having acceded to the combination. The secrecy with which combinations are necessarily formed and conducted, obviously tends to lead all who are concerned in them into duplicity and deceit; and is, therefore, a circumstance sufficient of itself to alarm a conscientious and ingenuous mind. In truth, they naturally commence and terminate in fraud. On these accounts, as well as from their effect in obstructing the primary ends of commerce, and rendering all articles to which they are extended scarce and dear; it is the duty of a person engaged in trade to refuse all connexion with the confederacies under consideration. In general, too, it is his interest, if he be a man of skill, industry, and merit. For, while ignorance and slothfulness place a false dependence on artificial and iniquitous manœuvres; the opposite qualifications, if directed in an honest course, seldom fail to be crowned with success.

#### COMBINATIONS.

Combinations are usually vindicated by the persons concerned in them, on the plea of general

convenience, or of self-defence. Many evils, it is alleged, arise to the public from the frauds and the uncertainty of price produced by the competition of traders. The Legislature has frequently found itself constrained to remedy them by its interposition; as by limiting in various instances the fare of hackney-coaches, &c. And the advantages which result from the rates and prices of certain articles being fixed by the voluntary agreement of individuals, are universally acknowledged. Why, it is asked, may not similar agreements as to the price of other articles be of equally general benefit, if the terms fixed upon are moderate? In reply, it may be in the first place observed, that the part of the argument which rests on the moderation of the terms must be totally laid aside. For, when the combination is once established, it is extremely easy then to raise the term. In the next place, we need not hesitate to admit, that, in a few particular cases, agreements for the purpose of regulating prices may be useful; namely, when the article in question is in abundance, and cannot be monopolized or rendered scarce; and the regulation will confessedly prevent frauds, material loss of time, or rude squabbles with the lower classes of the community. And in such cases those agreements are justi-

fiable, as long as their main object is the public good, and not the private interest of the parties who form them. But nothing is more palpably fallacious than, from some trifling evils occasionally flowing from unrestrained competition, to argue against competition itself; on which commercial enterprize, the plenty and cheapness of articles, the improvement of manufactures, and the civil usage of customers, radically depend. The second plea for combinations is self-defence; as when sellers combine, and buyers follow their example in order to oppose them. It is a sufficient answer to this plea, that counter-combinations are illegal, and, therefore, immoral. Besides, they are productive of the general bad effects of other combinations.

#### REDUCING PRICES.

The reduction of existing prices to a lower rate, when such a rate, if permanently adopted, will still afford an equitable and ample profit, is sometimes opposed not only by the prejudiced and the selfish, but by men of upright principles and liberal views. The former endeavour to give some colour to their objections, by pleading for the continuance of high profits, on the ground of public good. They state, that great gains afford a general encouragement to the extension of

trade, a benefit of the utmost value to a commercial state ; that, however large they may be, they are liberally expended and usefully employed by the possessor ; and that, being thus returned into circulation, they excite and reward industry, and furnish occupation and subsistence to all the inferior classes of society. But they forget that whatever might be subtracted from their profits by a reduction of prices, would be so much saved to the consumers, who comprehending all the lower ranks of the people, are not only much more numerous, but are likewise in circumstances far more distressed, all things considered, than the body of traders ; and that as money is certainly not more likely to be hoarded up by the poor than by the rich, whatever the consumers gain will be expended and employed in exciting and rewarding industry, and that of the most useful kind, as effectually as it would have been by the opulent trader.

The arguments alleged by the other class of objectors, men of upright and benevolent intentions, though not altogether conclusive, do credit to the motives of those who urge them, and are not without their weight. It is said, that although the merchant who deals on a very extensive scale might still gain an ample recompense, if he were to make even a considerable abatement in his

terms, yet it would be wrong for him to make it ; because smaller dealers in the same article, when obliged, as they soon would be, to lower their prices to the same standard, would not be able to acquire a subsistence for themselves and families. This reasoning, though it forcibly points out the distressing consequences which might follow from large reductions suddenly made, does not prove the impropriety of making even large reductions gradually.

Were this mode adopted, no immediate or material inconvenience would be felt by any individual ; and in the course of years the number of small dealers would be diminished, partly by some of them turning their little capitals into other branches of trade, but principally from the circumstance of fewer entering from time to time into that particular line, until it had at length subsided to that proportion which would be able to procure a comfortable livelihood on the reduced state of profit. And further, it must not be forgotten, that if this principle of reasonable reduction were pursued as far as it might be in different trades ; an event towards which no steps can be taken unless great dealers begin to set the example ; those small dealers, who might experience a diminution of their incomes by selling their own commodities at a reduced price, would

be benefited in return, by being able to lay in their stock for trade, and to purchase, in the capacity of consumers, other articles from their neighbours on lower terms. We may observe, in quitting this subject, that whoever is convinced, on conscientious reflection, of the propriety of reducing the terms and prices of his own business, ought not to be deterred from carrying the plan into execution, by the public clamour, or the private solicitations of his avaricious and mistaken brethren.

#### PROBITY.

Among the moral virtues peculiarly to be cultivated by persons occupied in business or commerce, probity stands foremost. It may appear superfluous to admonish the trader to practise common honesty ; but perhaps it is less so than it may seem. This remark is not intended to convey illiberal and unmerited reflections on the character of particular descriptions of men ; nor to intimate that a considerable number of traders would knowingly be guilty, if opportunity should offer, of gross cheating. Individuals there are, in the trading world, so destitute of moral principle as to purchase gain by every possible method ; plundering individuals, and defrauding the revenue, regardless of the laws of God, and

of those of their country. But men that act thus, are not to be reclaimed by a short and transitory warning.

My chief design is to put the man of business on his guard against being drawn almost imperceptibly into practices, which, though they may be rendered familiar to the mind by habit, and may carry on their face no striking characteristics of criminality, yet will be found, on examination, to partake of deceit, and to merit the appellation of petty frauds. The temptations to such practices vary, as well as the practices themselves, in each different employment; but they occur more or less, and are too frequently indulged, in all. Some instances of them will be given hereafter: but in this place it is necessary to mention one of the principal grounds on which they are defended. This is what is called the *custom of trade*. In all matters which in their own nature are indifferent, the custom of trade may be a proper guide; and in many cases which will occur, it is the only guide: but innumerable evils result from adopting it as the general rule of commercial morality. Under its deluding influence the trader blindly proceeds in the beaten path, rarely exercising his judgment, except in the most glaring cases, in the discrimination of right and wrong; or surrendering up his scruples

to its authority, and acquiescing in practices which he discerns to be fraudulent, merely because they appear sanctioned by the conduct of his neighbours. But he who is solicitous "to preserve a conscience void of offence" will not put his conscience in commission. He will examine every thing for himself. He will entertain strong and jealous suspicions, that, in the complicated dealings of trade, where selfishness meets with continual opportunities of gratifying itself, common usage will have established many proceedings which it will be his duty to decline and to counteract. He will be ever on the watch against being betrayed into guilt by the snares of custom. He will not be deterred, either by false shame, by mistaken ideas of honour, by the certainty of present loss, or by the apprehension of offending his partners, though they should be older and richer than himself, and though his own prospects should greatly depend on the continuance of the connection, from discharging his private duty, and setting an upright and encouraging example to others, by abandoning every practice, however generally prevalent, which he believes to be tinctured with deceit. Much less will he ever be induced to break or evade the laws of his country, either by the plea of custom, or of what he will hear termed the necessity of



trade. Nor will he be misled by the temptation, though it should assume, as it sometimes will, a more delusive shape. If he perceives, or imagines that he perceives, in an existing statute, something absurd, inexpedient, and injurious to commerce; and is almost disposed to conclude that he shall act a meritorious part in disregarding an injunction prejudicial to the public; let him remember that the Legislature, and not himself, is the judge appointed by the Constitution to decide on commercial expediency and the national welfare; and that if he claims the rights of a citizen, he must conform to the restrictions of the laws.

Conscious of the improper bias to which his judgment will be liable, if he has to form his general principles concerning the duties of his employment, or his opinions respecting particular customs of trade, at the moment when he is assailed by temptations and called upon to act; he will revolve these subjects in his mind betimes, and provide beforehand against the hour of trial. He will prepare himself to bear the brunt of the attacks, which he may expect from those among his brother traders, whose ideas of right and wrong are less strict than his own. Hackneyed in the artifices of their craft; fearful of being exposed to public odium, and to the risk of a

diminution of emolument ; stung by what they will term his affectation of superior purity ; and enraged at his refusal to join in their dishonest combinations ; they will use every art in public and in private to undermine his resolution, and to discountenance his tenets. Nor must he be surprised if some of his prudent friends, anxious for his success in the world, should kindly take the trouble of counselling his inexperienced youth. They will tell him that trade cannot exist, if people are to be so unreasonably conscientious ; they will point out the folly of resolving to engage with his competitors, and with the world, on such unequal terms ; they will exhort him to follow the example of older men, who, no doubt, understand the proper ways of doing business better than himself ; and not to be cheated of solid and substantial profit by visionary dreams of impracticable morality.

But let him not be alarmed ; or, if alarmed, let him not be deterred. Let him remember on what authority it is said, “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil.” Honesty, he may be tolerably satisfied, is the best policy as to this life ; he cannot doubt whether it is so as to the next. Honesty consists in equally withstanding temptations, whether small or great, whether leading to practices condemned or sanctioned by

the multitude. Applied to trade, it necessarily includes some sacrifices of possible gain. Nay, it requires every branch of business to be abandoned, which cannot be carried on to advantage without the practice of fraud. The merchant, to whom it has never yet happened to relinquish any gain for the sake of a good conscience, may suspect that he has no conscience. The origin of almost all the unjustifiable proceedings in trade, is a spirit of covetousness. He alone may hope that he is free from that spirit, who pursues his business, not with a mind thirsting for superiority, nor with the mere view of accumulating wealth, but principally with the design of doing good. And he who forbears to take unlawful or questionable gains, does, even in that respect, more service to the world by his example, than he could have done by the application of such gains to purposes seemingly the most charitable and beneficial.

#### FRUGALITY IN PERSONAL AND DOMESTIC EXPENSES.

That pecuniary sacrifices may be made with ease whenever probity requires them, all personal and domestic expenses should be adjusted, especially at a merchant's outset in business, on a plan

of regular frugality. As the ordinary profits of trade do not exceed eight or ten per cent., the young trader who sets out with spending at a higher rate, cannot be said to act an honest part. And he seldom acts with prudence in spending at first more than half the sum. In the case of the commission business, and in trades which are carried on rather by the labour and ingenuity of the manager than by the capital which he possesses, somewhat more latitude may be allowed.

Frugality is recommended, not as implying parsimonious meanness, nor as checking the suggestions of charity; but as opposed to gaudy splendour, to luxuriousness, to extravagance; and as a guard against vicious indulgences and habits. If it be a virtue peculiarly incumbent on one man above another, it is on him, who risks in his daily employment, as all merchants may be said to do in a greater or a less degree, the credit and property of others. And if there be any person under more than usual temptations to neglect it, surely it is he whose occupation continually supplies him with ready money; the want of which frequently contributes to restrain other men from becoming prodigal.

On this virtue then let the merchant rely for eminence and wealth; to this let him look as the spring destined to feed those future streams of

bounty and benevolence in which the redundant profits of trade are best expended, diffusing comfort to the wretched, and manifesting the gratitude of him who bids them flow to the supreme giver of all prosperity. To "labour with his hands, that he may have to give to him that needeth," is a precept addressed by the Apostle primarily to a particular description of men; but equally adapted to all men engaged in profitable labour. Let the man of business neither neglect the inducement to labour which it suggests to him; nor the application which it enjoins of a liberal portion of the fruits which that labour produces. It is a laudable and wise method for a merchant, and for every man who follows a lucrative profession, to establish in his mind a principle of allotting annually a settled proportion of his profits to charitable purposes; that is to say, after assigning a fixed and moderate sum for his necessary expenses, and a moderate additional sum, as the family for which he is to provide and other circumstances require, for accumulation, to devote a large proportion of the remaining excess of profit to unostentatious charity. The sum for accumulation might also be lightly taxed. The fund thus raised there would be no difficulty in applying.

**FIDELITY TO VERBAL ENGAGEMENTS.**

A strict and active principle of probity will also teach the merchant to be scrupulously observant of his verbal engagements in all pecuniary and mercantile transactions; and carefully to guard against exciting expectations of any kind, which there is not a fair prospect of his being able to satisfy. It will render him faithful and attentive in the concerns of other men committed to his care, or depending on his conduct. It will deter him from embarking in adventurous enterprizes of traffic, in which the risk is not compensated by a reasonable prospect of extraordinary advantages. And even if there should be sufficient grounds to expect returns unusually profitable, it will restrain him from involving too large a share of his capital in the undertaking. He will remember that the fairest hopes may be blasted; and will think of the calamities of those who might be ruined by his misfortunes. He will likewise bear in mind that imprudence and consequent distress have betrayed numbers into dishonesty and deceit, who once felt confident in their own integrity.

**FAIRNESS AND OPENNESS OF DEALING.**

To secure himself as far as may be both from the risk and from the suspicion of practising dupli-

city, the merchant will be anxious to lay open, in such a measure as prudence will permit, the principles on which he acts in his profession. He will derive heartfelt satisfaction from reflecting that he has fairly acquainted his customers with the rules which he has prescribed for his own conduct; and that he has thus in some degree contributed to preclude himself from all deviation from them by having rendered it more difficult, and more shameful. Nor will he forget that it is wiser manfully to communicate at once, what may hereafter be made public even against his consent. His own bankruptcy, the failure of others with whom he has concerns, unforeseen law-suits, dissolutions of partnerships, unsettled accounts transacted with executors, and other unexpected events, may disclose his proceedings to the world. These considerations, while, in the place of better motives, they may deter the fraudulent trader from persisting in his craftiness, may also justly incite the man of integrity to shun every unnecessary concealment; lest he should be suspected of being unwilling to draw aside the veil, from a consciousness that something disgraceful would be found behind it.

In various other instances the same attention to upright and ingenuous dealing will display itself. He will not give undue preference to par-

ticular customers ; he will not impose on the ignorant, nor surprise the unwary, nor take advantage of the necessitous. He will not assert certain specific terms to be the lowest on which he can transact business, or conclude a bargain, at the time when he means, if pressed closely, to accept lower ; nor ask higher than he intends to take, for the purpose of making a merit of giving way. He will be solicitous to name at the first his lowest price ; and not to expose himself, by making large abatements, or by fluctuating backwards and forwards between concession and resistance, to the charge of being on the watch for opportunities of exaction. The great merchant not unfrequently declaims against the shop-keeper, with whom he deals for the little articles of domestic consumption, if the latter asks a higher price, and then takes a lower ; while he is doing the same thing on the largest scale in his own mercantile transactions.

#### TRANSACTIONS WITH THE LEGISLATURE.

An upright merchant will not be led by the suggestions of self-interest, or by an improper deference to the opinion or compliance with the importunities of others, to apply to the Legislature for privileges and encouragements, or to oppose taxes and restrictions affecting the article



in which he deals, either singly or in conjunction with his brother traders ; until he is convinced on serious and impartial consideration that there is nothing in the proceedings which is unreasonable, and adverse to the public good. He will not lay a partial or imperfect statement of the case before his representative in private, or before the Legislature or their committees. He will not seek to ensnare them into acquiescence by false pretences and exaggerated accounts ; nor profess to be petitioning merely for one object, while he is secretly pursuing another which he dares not avow.

#### COMMERCIAL CREDIT.

The subject of credit, being extremely important, and affecting all classes of merchants, requires some general observations in this place. It will naturally be pursued through most of its ramifications in the subsequent heads into which the present chapter will be divided.

The term credit has different significations as it respects different men. When applied to a soldier, it chiefly regards courage ; when to a lawyer, abilities. In commercial language it means the title which a merchant is supposed to have in the world to confidence in respect to his

mercantile, and more particularly his pecuniary transactions.

In this sense, as being generally received in the trading world, the term is to be understood in the following pages. But as some confusion occasionally arises, both among merchants and others, from the vagueness with which it is used ; it may be expedient to add some further explanation, for the purpose of accurately distinguishing commercial credit from other points not always discriminated from it. It may, therefore, be observed, that by credit is not meant the merchant's credit as a man, but solely as a merchant : although his credit as a man, and even as a religious man, may to a certain degree mix itself in the question. He who is proud, passionate, avaricious, voluptuous, and irreligious, may be *a very good man*, according to mercantile language ; that is, a man in good credit ; for he may at the same time be rich, punctual in his payments, and possibly also prudent, and tolerably fair in his dealings. But he will not be quite in so good commercial credit as if he were, in his character as a man, of the contrary description ; though he may be in much better credit than far worthier men.

Further, credit in the mercantile sense does not mean the merchant's credit in his own eyes,

but in the eyes of the world. Though it may be said, therefore, to be his duty to keep up his credit, the direction does not mean that it is his duty, or that it is allowable in him, to gratify whatever arrogant ideas he may entertain of commercial dignity and reputation. Men, under the plea of upholding their credit, and continually alleging their favourite axiom, that it is right so to do, often pursue little else than the indulgence of their pride; and perhaps impair their credit, or at least what ought to be the true foundations of it, by their ill-directed and reprehensible efforts.

A merchant, for instance, maintains an establishment unsuitable to his profits, or to the state of his family, professedly for the sake of his credit, pleading that he thus gains reputation and attracts custom; while, in fact, pride has insinuated itself, and is at the bottom of all his proceedings. In this case it often happens, that while the merchant conceives himself to be supporting his credit, and is swelling with the idea of his own importance, he is actually pulling down his credit in the opinion of those who are looking upon him. Men out of business, who have no connection with him, and do not scrutinize his character, may perhaps be deceived; but while they are estimating his wealth and consequence by outward appearances, men in busi-

ness who deal with him, and with whom alone his credit is important, are forming a very different conclusion.

Many other instances might be added to exemplify how distinct a thing commercial credit is from the gratification of pride. Thus a merchant, perhaps, insists, that his name shall stand foremost in the firm of the house; his credit, he asserts, will suffer, if it does not; while it frequently is evident that he is actuated considerably, or chiefly, by an ostentatious desire of apparent superiority. Or, perhaps, he borrows money through the medium of a clerk or agent, in some covert or disreputable way, in order to spare himself the mortification which his pride would sustain, were he to borrow in his own person, in an open and creditable manner. Or it may be, that he disdains to borrow at all; and through this disdain puts his credit to real and serious hazard. Or he refuses to communicate the situation of his affairs to his partners, especially if they are his juniors; arrogantly claiming to be implicitly trusted on his known credit. Or he forbears to dissolve a partnership with an improper associate, through the fear, as he strives to persuade himself, of having his credit impaired, but in reality of having his pride wounded,

by betraying to the world that the connection was imprudent and wrong from the beginning.

#### DEGREES OF CREDIT.

Credit admits of degrees. It is the duty of some merchants to cultivate it in a higher degree ; of others, in a lower. It is to be cultivated in order to be used ; not to feed the pride of the possessor. There is a rational length, therefore, beyond which, attempts should not be made to carry it. It would be absurd for a small country merchant to aspire to rival the credit of a great metropolitan merchant. It is enough if each man's credit suffices for the carrying on of his particular business. Let not merchants then in higher credit despise those in lower ; nor those in lower credit emulate those in higher. And let those who pique themselves on their commercial credit, remember how small a part it forms of the real character of the man.

#### FOUNDATIONS OF CREDIT.

Though credit has been defined to be the title which a merchant *is supposed* to have in the world to confidence in respect to his pecuniary and mercantile engagements and transactions, it is obviously his duty to provide that the title be real, and that there be solid foundations for confidence

to rest on. The foundations of a trader's credit are property, integrity, punctuality, industry, prudence, openness of dealing, freedom from extravagance, from a spirit of wild speculation, and from vice, and the character of the partners and of others with whom he is closely connected. The natural effects of these qualifications are sufficiently plain. It may be noticed, however, that although property may hold the first place, in common language, among the stable grounds of credit, yet the influence of the other requisites which have been specified is extremely great; and particularly of a character of established eminence for the practice of those moral virtues, which, being obligatory independently of their consequences as to commercial success, have been pointed out to the trader antecedently to any mention of the subject of credit. They who have been known universally to have conducted their business according to the rules of fairness and plain dealing; to have made no vain parade of their credit; to have resorted to no device calculated to excite an erroneous opinion of their wealth, of the reliance placed upon them, or of their prudence, industry, talents, and dispositions; to have abstained from improper transactions, however profitable; to have dared to tell truths even when unfavourable to their credit; and

never to have deviated from rectitude in those trying conjunctures which bring men's principles to the test ; have found themselves rewarded in critical times by the confidence of the public, by the warm attachment and strenuous exertions of their friends, and even by generous and ample offers of assistance from quarters from which it was the least expected.

As a merchant who does not fully possess the real foundations of credit may chance, for a time at least, to obtain it ; so another, who has the foundations, may yet be without the credit which he deserves. Let the former strenuously exert himself to merit the confidence which accident has conferred upon him ; and scrupulously refrain from using it in the smallest degree farther than his property and situation render warrantable in the eye of conscience. Let the latter, instead of resorting to improper steps for the purpose of augmenting his credit, patiently submit to the want of it as to other unavoidable evils ; and wait till by his perseverance in good conduct the unfavourable impressions conceived against him be done away.

#### PUNCTUALITY.

While the merchant is careful on the one hand not to use any endeavours for extending his busi-

ness repugnant to equity and good faith, or to the spirit of candour and liberality; he will be equally attentive on the other, not to be deficient in just and laudable exertions. By unabating diligence he will promote, together with his own advantage, the interest of his employers; by discarding unnecessary forms, he will consult their accommodation; by mild and attractive manners, he will conciliate their esteem. In particular, he will study to give them no grounds to reproach him with the want of punctuality. A failure in this point may frequently be of material detriment to their plans and prospects; and will always excite in them a great share of dissatisfaction, greater perhaps than ought to be felt under the circumstances of the case.

#### THE MERCHANT'S ACCOUNTS.

It is one of the first duties of an upright merchant to keep accurate accounts; and by frequent and sober inspection to be at all times master of the situation of his affairs. If he perceives them at any period to be so far embarrassed as to give him more solid grounds to fear that they will continue to decline, than to hope that they may prosper and be retrieved; let him not be driven by a sanguine temper to the reprehensible, and frequently disastrous, experiment of striving ad-



venturously to weather the storm : and of endeavouring to regain what he has lost by risking his remaining property, which belongs rather to his creditors than to himself. Let him not overrate his resources, the goodness of his debts, or the probable sale and product of his goods. But above all things let him not seek to bolster up his credit by unjustifiable means. Let him not put off the evil day by accepting deposits, much less by obtaining loans, from the unsuspecting. Let him display a mind superior to the suggestions of false shame, and alive only to the impulse of moral rectitude. Let him not make secret payments to particular friends and connections : let him assemble all those who have demands upon him ; let him lay before them a fair statement of his past transactions, of his present condition, and of his future prospects. If he should foresee that instant bankruptcy must be the consequence of such a disclosure, let him be no less earnest to become a bankrupt for the just advantage of his creditors, than he would have been resolute not to fail by collusion for the purpose of defrauding them. One of the principal grounds on which it is his duty to stop payment is the necessity under which he is laid, while he continues to go on, of making partial payments ; that is to say, payments to some creditors, to the

injury of others. If he goes on a week too long, the payments during that week cannot but be partial ; for, as long as he proceeds as a solvent man, he cannot proportion his payments to his creditors according to their respective debts : to do that, he must have the aid of the law. While a trader is hesitating whether to stop or not, which he may reasonably be supposed to do for a few days while examining his accounts and resources, he should endeavour, if obliged to make some payments, to make them according to due proportion, lessening perhaps still more some of the heaviest ; and not giving a preference, as in such a crisis he will be tempted to do, to the most importunate and unrelenting creditors. Rather let the consideration of their importunity and severity hasten the period of his stopping.

#### DUTY OF THE INSOLVENT MERCHANT.

If such be the duty of a person whose affairs are in a state not greatly worse than ambiguous ; never let the trader act on the presumption of retrieving his circumstances, when they have become flagrantly insolvent. Let him consider, that by stopping fairly at once he may gain a complete discharge from his debts ; and that, by attempting to proceed, he not only risks the loss of that advantage, but exposes himself to a mul-

titude of temptations ; temptations, namely, to set up false credit, to engage in adventurous speculations, to concealment of the situation of his affairs from clerks and others, and ultimately, to despair of mind. Let him recollect the consciousness of dishonesty and deceit, which will attend him in every step that he takes ; and the increased obloquy and disgrace, which await him if obliged to fail at last. A hasty resolution of endeavouring to stand his ground, may leave him a prey for life to sorrow and remorse. Let him beware of following the selfish advice of some creditor, who may have an interest in urging him not to stop ; a creditor whose debt is perhaps so large, as to make him fear lest his own credit should be hurt by the failure of so great a debtor ; or who wishes the insolvent man to proceed, in order that, by giving him a false credit in the eyes of others, he may at their expense finally escape loss himself. It is remarkable, that in bankruptcies it does not happen in general, that the dividend made on the assets amounts to more than 25 or 30 per cent. ; a fact, which shows how great a proneness there is in the trading world to forbear too long from stopping payment, and which may itself operate as a striking admonition on the subject.

## DUTY OF CULTIVATING THE MIND.

The man who is constantly engaged in one particular employment, and accustomed to direct his thoughts day after day and year after year into the same channel, frequently acquires a narrow turn of mind. Like the surveyor who traverses a country for the purpose of laying out a turnpike road, regardless of its beauties and careless as to its fertility, and attending to its inequalities merely with an eye to the forming of a communication between them, to the quantity of materials which will be wanting, and the facility with which they may be procured; he neglects to exercise his understanding in enlarged and comprehensive views of the various objects around him; and, if he contemplates them at all, measures them only by that limited and inadequate scale, to which he has been used to refer the concerns of his private occupation. Of all the professions which are in the hands of the higher and middle classes of society, none perhaps lead more directly to contracted ideas than those which consist in buying and selling, in casting up accounts, in calculating pecuniary risks and advantages, and in the uniform transactions of the counting-house and shop. To guard the youth destined for such a situation

from falling into the trammels of prejudice, and habituating himself to partial and confined views of things, it is peculiarly desirable that his mind be cultivated, his faculties expanded, and his ideas taught to expatiate in a wide and ample range, by a liberal and learned education. The neglect of his improvement in literature is the more blamable, as he will probably be snatched away from schools and tutors, and initiated in the mysteries and immersed in the details of his future employment, at an earlier age than his companions, who are intended for the ministry, for physic, or for the bar. But let him not abandon his studies when he commences a man of business. Let him not throw aside his armour when he wants it the most. Let him sedulously devote his leisure, let him sedulously redeem from scenes of trifling amusement, leisure that it may be devoted, to the perusal of eminent authors, ancient as well as modern, to works of general information, of science, and of taste. Many a wary father would start at these words, as indicating the high road to ruin. Many a wary father has inculcated on his son that trade has nothing to do with learning. The sagacious parent considers all reading, except that of day-books, tables of interest, invoices, and orders from correspondents, as indisposing the mind to

commerce, and as a waste of valuable time ; as never contributing to the gaining of money, and too often to the spending of it. But let not the son be a merchant, unless he may be something more. Let him also be a virtuous, wise, and enlightened man, at once a benefit and an ornament to society. Fathers of families, who have sons in trade, ought to encourage them in rational and improving pursuits, and warn them against trifling away, as is often done, all the remainder of the day, after business is over, in idle conversation. And if they are conscious of a deficiency of knowledge in themselves, with the greater earnestness should they excite their sons to the attainment of more. These observations may be extended to persons who have young men destined for trade under their care, either as apprentices or on any other footing.

#### DUTY OF SELF-CONTROL.

Let the trader keep a constant and vigilant eye over the habits of his mind and the workings of his heart, lest he should gradually be immersed and absorbed in mere worldly concerns ; lest he should contract a covetous and niggardly spirit, estimating too highly the importance of riches, and unwilling to apply them to their proper use. Above all things let him not depend

solely or principally on himself, nor ascribe his success solely or principally to his own exertions. "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God; lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up—and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." To the supreme disposer of all things let him be grateful in prosperity, let him be cheerfully submissive in misfortunes. Let him not repine when his hopes are crossed; nor envy those to whom Providence may appear more bountiful. Let him not vilify and calumniate his competitors; nor suffer the seeds of hatred towards them to find shelter for a moment in his breast. Let him be candid to merit, even in a rival. Let him look with kindness on young beginners in his own occupation, and remember that the world is large enough for him and them. Let him omit no favourable opportunity of admonishing the thoughtless, of encouraging the deserving, of aiding the unfortunate, of discountenancing the idle, the fraudulent and the vicious.

In a word, let him study to promote in others the practice of those virtues which he feels incumbent on himself.

#### OBSERVATION OF THE SABBATH.

It may be necessary to suggest to the merchant a particular caution against infringing the Sabbath. Let him not imitate those among his brethren who make it a mere day of pleasure and conviviality ; or who, being prevented by established custom from opening their counting-houses and shops, show by employing it in casting up books and writing letters on business, that principle would not detain them from their ordinary occupation. A strict attention to the proper duties of the seventh day, in addition to the daily duties of religion, is not more than sufficient to teach him who is engaged during the six days in “laying up treasure on earth,” that his first concern is “to lay up treasure in heaven.”

#### PARTNERSHIP.

In selecting the persons with whom he connects himself in partnership, while the merchant reflects that one ignorant, careless, or adventurous man may impair the credit and bring on the ruin of his associates ; let him not undervalue the danger to which his own principles may be exposed by continual intercourse with a man of



immoral character. Let him remember too, that the character of the persons whom he selects to be his friends and the companions of his leisure hours, will have a manifest effect, not only, as has been already mentioned, on his credit, but also on his manners and private conduct. The intimacies of a merchant are commonly formed on mercantile principles. He is apt to associate chiefly with men engaged in commerce, with brokers, customers, and others, by whose instrumentality he may gain money; and to associate with them not merely from similarity of pursuits, and the necessary connections of business, but from an habitual attention to profit, and a solicitude to turn even the moments of relaxation to pecuniary advantage. Through the influence of lurking avarice, he is prone to consider little, either the religious, moral, or mental qualities of his acquaintance, except as far as they may be likely to make him richer or poorer. And through the same influence he sometimes renders himself deservedly unhappy through life, by making wealth and lucrative connections the grand object of matrimonial engagements.

#### INFLUENCE OF THE MERCHANT'S EXAMPLE.

It frequently happens that men over-rate the good which they have done; and perhaps it is

equally common for them to have considered too little the good which they might have done. The services which a person engaged in a liberal line of trade or business may render to the public by an upright discharge of the duties of his occupation, and a diligent attention to the opportunities of usefulness which it affords, are not sufficiently regarded. He who pursues his employment for its proper ends ; and conducts himself on principles of equity and benevolence ; who scrupulously obeys the precepts of religion, and the laws of his country ; who seeks no unfair or unreasonable advantages, nor takes them even when they obtrude themselves upon him for acceptance ; who withstands pernicious combinations, and dares even to set the example of breaking dishonest and disingenuous customs ; who joins openness to prudence, and benevolence to frugality ; who shows himself candid to his rivals, modest in success, and cheerful under disappointments ; and who adorns his professional knowledge with the various acquisitions of an enlarged and cultivated understanding, is a benefactor to his country and to mankind. His example and his influence operate at once on the circle in which he moves, and gradually extend themselves far and wide. Others who have been witnesses of his proceedings and his virtues, imitate

them both ; and become the centres of improvement to additional circles. Thus a broad foundation is laid for purifying trade from the real stains which it has contracted, and of rescuing it from the disgraceful imputations with which it is undeservedly charged. And thus a single individual may contribute in no small degree to produce a moral revolution in the commercial character.

#### FALSE PRETENCES WITH RESPECT TO PROPERTY.

Scrupulous integrity and veracity must also be enumerated among the general foundations of a merchant's credit. His character for these virtues ought to be conspicuous throughout the wide circle with which he is connected. To display, however, either his integrity or his property with ostentatious parade, is not the way to be deemed actually to possess them. It should be remembered too, that all exaggerated statements of his wealth are breaches of integrity and veracity ; and all partial representations, and all modes of dissimulation resorted to for the purpose of conveying too high an idea of his property, or of disguising the want of it, or of giving to any transactions a colour which does not belong to it. The merchant who receives from a parent or relation an ostensible gift of capital, which by

private agreement is to be no more than a loan ; who invests in bank stock borrowed money to a large amount, in order that it may appear to be his own property ; or for the same purpose lays out in landed estates great sums raised by the emission of notes, acts in manifest opposition to the principles of integrity and fair dealing.

#### CHARACTER FOR PRUDENCE.

Known prudence is also one of the qualifications requisite to the credit of a merchant. Another, and that of some importance, is proper openness and facility in transacting business. Useless forms and studied mysteriousness, which have sometimes been adopted or retained for the sake of gaining credit, are rather a ground of discredit ; and they are occasionally cloaks for deceit and fraud. But there is nothing reprehensible in a merchant's keeping those circumstances private, the disclosure of which might endanger his credit, through the incompetence of persons unacquainted with the nature of mercantile business to form an adequate judgment concerning them. Thus, it is not wrong in him to conceal from the world in general the amount of the sum kept in his house to answer current demands. On the contrary, it would be absurd and hurtful to divulge it. Other concealments are

justifiable on the same principle. To the qualifications already enumerated may be added the advantage of known connections with persons of property, who in cases of necessity may come forward to the merchant's aid ; of moderation in private expenses ; of entire abstinence from gaming ; even of rational habits of conversation ; and whatever else may tend to afford just grounds for confidence in his character and conduct. A merchant, in whom so great trust is necessarily reposed, ought not to omit any method which may contribute towards enabling him to deserve it.

That the credit of a mercantile house may be affected by the vicious or unguarded conduct of any one of the partners, is undeniable. A similar observation may be advanced respecting the effect of the general behaviour of the clerks. If the clerks are sober and diligent, it seems to imply that the principals are so too. If there are frequent instances of carelessness, extravagance, dissipation, or immorality among the former, the public may suspect that the latter are themselves inattentive to their employment, negligent of moral rectitude, and unfit to be trusted with the property of others.

## NATURE OF PAPER CREDIT.

The subject of paper credit is of such extent and importance as to claim particular attention. For as the benefit of it to the country is on the one hand great; so on the other the abuse of it is very mischievous, and the temptations to abuse it are very great also. The observations already made in this chapter on the general subject of credit will be found applicable to the present branch of it. The principle, however, on which paper credit stands, must be in some measure stated and explained, in order both to evince the lawfulness and real use of paper credit, as well as to show distinctly the limits which should be prescribed to it. When once this statement is clearly made, by applying to the question a few plain principles of morality, any difficulties which attend it will easily be removed.

By paper credit we understand those engagements to pay money, which are made by bills and notes of various kinds. The very large use made of engagements of this description in the conduct of mercantile business, is of itself a presumption of the advantage derived from them to merchants, and consequently to the country also. Bills and notes considered in the simplest point of view, are acknowledgements serving precisely

to ascertain debts due from one trader to another, and the days on which they are to be paid. Through the provisions of the law respecting such debts, as well as the discredit attaching upon a banker or trader on any degree of failure in discharging them, they are found to be discharged with particular punctuality.

Another purpose which bills answer, is that of being a very commodious medium of transferring property, and becoming in consequence a substitute for specie. This use is made to a certain degree, not only of bank notes payable on demand, but of all other notes of hand, and bills of exchange. They form that medium which the trading world principally uses, from a conviction of its convenience founded on the amplest experience; as it saves not only that capital which must otherwise be applied in the purchase of specie, but as it is abundantly more commodious in some respects, and, when payments are to be made at a distance, more secure, than specie itself. Further, as the giving of a bill pledges the giver to the punctual payment of the debt which it acknowledges; so the possession of bills gathered in the course of trade furnishes him in the most eligible and economical manner with the means of paying it. The merchant who is in possession of a drawer full of bills growing due, is in pos-

session of a fund ordinarily convertible into money at whatever time demands for money may come upon him ; there being always persons to be found ready to give money for bills, in consideration of a discount or allowance of interest for the time intervening before they become due. The utility of the system of paper credit appears even from the mischiefs occasionally resulting from a great failure of such credit ; inasmuch as they arise chiefly from the suspension of those advantages to which the trading world has been accustomed, and on the expectation of the continuance of which it has also founded all its mercantile speculations.

#### DUTY OF THE MERCHANT AND BANK WITH RESPECT TO PAPER CREDIT.

The general nature and use of paper credit having been thus laid down, the rules by which it ought to be regulated will be very obvious. The fundamental principle to be insisted on with respect to contracting engagements of the nature in question, is that which should regulate every engagement of every kind ; namely, that they who promise should know themselves to be able to perform. It is manifestly not enough, that he who signs or endorses a bill (for the same general principles attach to both) should know that he is able ultimately to pay it : he should know



that he is able to pay it, that is to say, to find fair means of paying it, at the time when it becomes due. In this latter particular, however, some latitude of interpretation is allowable. He is not bound to be morally certain that he shall be able to pay it in every possible emergence which may arise. The possibility of a great political convulsion, of a general stagnation of mercantile credit, or of some very extraordinary loss of his own; though any one of these events might disable an individual from paying his bill, should not prevent him from giving a bill: these not being events reasonably to be calculated upon. And the *concurring* demands of a very large number of holders of his notes are no more to be calculated upon than the cases above mentioned: indeed they commonly imply the existence of one of those very cases, namely, a general stagnation of mercantile credit. Neither a merchant, therefore, nor any other person, is bound in conscience to limit his signature and endorsement of bills to the sum which he knows he may by possibility be required to pay; nor to that which he may literally have bound himself to pay; but to the sum for which he may reasonably expect that he shall in consequence of those engagements be called upon. Care, however, is

to be taken, and in the case of a banker especial care, that he keeps on the prudent side.

The evils resulting from the abuse of paper credit have been supposed often to proceed from unwarrantable conduct on the part of bank directors. Eagerness to obtain a high interest, and other advantages, frequently cause a very improvident, and therefore, criminal use to be made of the money arising from deposits, and from the circulation of notes. In this pursuit great risk is run of ultimate insolvency, and a still greater risk of failing in punctuality of payment, by employing the money in discounting bills of a dubious nature, or becoming due at too distant a period; in disregard of the fundamental rules to which the bank director ought carefully to attend, namely, of lending on good securities, and at moderate dates. And considerable risk is sometimes incurred by carelessness and inattention; by a sanguine temper; by placing undue reliance on young and adventurous advisers; or perhaps by blindly following an established practice of giving out interest notes to too great an extent, without taking care that a sufficient interval shall be allowed between the time of their being presented for acceptance, and payment; and by following other old habits of the place, which, under new circumstances, are become insecure.

The circulation of notes, for which no interest is allowed, and which are commonly payable on demand, is supposed to be one of the most profitable parts of the banking business. Their circulation is promoted chiefly by the customers of the bank, who accept of them instead of specie, and pay them away perhaps at some distance of time or place; thus circulating them in proportion as their own dealings with the bank are large or small, and having large or small dealings there in proportion as the bank gives them larger or smaller credit. Thus the bank is under a great temptation to give large credit, for the sake of the greater circulation of these profitable notes, as well as for the sake also of the commission or other advantages accruing from the transactions. Again, the notes in circulation furnish the fund through which the bank finds itself able to make those advances to its customer, which operate to the extension of their dealings together. And thus the two parts of the banking business reciprocally serve to extend each other; the circulation of notes extending the means of discounting bills for customers, and the discounting of bills extending the quantity of notes taken away and circulated. Hence the bank may lend its credit to the customer to a vast extent, while neither party possesses an ade-

quate capital : placing out the money, raised from the public, on the security of bills fabricated for the purpose by the merchant ; who perhaps is either squandering it in expensive modes of living, or employing it, regardless of the very great interest which he pays for it through reiterated commissions, in adventurous and continually losing speculations.

The duty of a bank director, to guard against these temptations, is great in proportion as the temptations are strong, and as the evil resulting from giving these enormous credits has been experienced to be great. Let him then consider, that he is peculiarly liable to be assailed by applications from adventurers of the description which has been noticed ; that he is in an especial manner the guardian of paper credit ; and, instead of being himself a speculator or the promoter of speculations in others, may justly be expected by the country to be the instrument by which all excesses and abuses of paper credit are to be stopped. Let him reflect on the distresses which may pervade a country through the failure of the credit even of a single house ; the miseries that may overwhelm the ruined families ; and the cruel anxiety which thousands may experience in their efforts to save themselves from the disgrace of failing in that general downfall of credit

which his levity, his inconsideration, his extravagant use of the credit of the bank, may contribute to bring on. Let him also dread the political evils which a general bankruptcy in a great mercantile and manufacturing country might produce. Let him remember, too, that paper credit is the great medium of our commerce, the coin in which the immense debts between merchant and merchant are paid ; that the general currency of this coin depends on the general solvency of the person pledged to pay it ; that an unsafe bill is a sort of base coin, which he should neither issue himself, nor put off to others ; and that though the law may not punish the fabrication of this counterfeit paper, as of counterfeit money, yet the moral evil is in each case nearly the same. Let it be his practice also to bear in mind that he is in continual danger of trespassing on the side of encouraging too adventurous a system, for which the desire of present profit, or the prospect of some promising speculation, is ever pleading ; that although it has been admitted that the merchant is not bound to be provided for every *possible* case which may occur, yet he must not, under cover of this concession, neglect to provide for such cases as are in any degree probable ; that he has no right to found his expectations of being able to continue his course of

payments on the supposed uniform continuance of all his present resources; that he ought to count on disappointments in his receipts, and on fulfilling to the utmost all his payments; that contingencies to a certain degree extraordinary are to be guarded against, as well as common fluctuations; and that experience has shown the necessity of being prepared even for the event of some general depression of credit in the mercantile world.

#### PECULIAR DUTIES OF THE BANK DIRECTOR.

But the whole of a bank director's duty in this respect does not consist in attending to the nature and state of the bank's engagements, with a view to its individual safety. Let him reflect how extremely important paper credit is to the country, and how necessary to its maintenance it is that it should rest on proper and solid foundations. Let him therefore make the right use of the many opportunities which he possesses, of watching the note transactions of others. Let him communicate with other bank directors on this subject; and show a marked distrust of those persons, whether his customers or not, who are found to be aiming to extend their credit at the same time in different quarters. Let him refuse to sign discharges for insolvents, who, having had little capital, have

nevertheless entered into enormous note engagements, and have applied the money thus raised to the establishment of vast monopolies, to wild and adventurous speculations, to schemes of ambition, and to the support of extensive and unsuitable domestic establishments; nor, if the misconduct be clearly ascertained, be moved by the injudicious, perhaps interested, applications of his customers or acquaintance on their behalf. In common transactions of the bank, let him carefully observe the nature of the notes brought before him to be discounted. Let him habitually request from those who bring them an explanation of every circumstance which seems dubious or suspicious; and endeavour to impress the persons offering paper with a sense of the general importance of openness and honesty in explaining the nature of their notes. Let him particularly distrust those notes which are not drawn in the customary way of trade for goods sold and delivered, but seem merely to be interchanged as matters of accommodation\* between the two par-

---

\* It is not meant that an accommodation note may not occasionally be drawn with perfect propriety, and that a banker may not with equal propriety discount it. The chief objection to such notes, in point of morality, is, that in common they apparently at least profess to be what they are not. They are stated on the face of them to be

ties to the bill ; each party perhaps raising money at the same time on the credit of a similar note,

---

*for value received*, and the note drawn for a broken sum, still more to favour the deception : and thus they gain the credit which belongs to notes drawn in the ordinary course of business. We need not say how very frequent this practice has of late years become, in our own mercantile community. All methods adopted for the purpose of disguising the nature of the note, are palpably unjustifiable. With respect however to the practice of inserting the terms “value received” in the note, though no value has been given for it, it may be observed, that the law requires these words to be inserted in every note in order to render it valid, and the debt which it acknowledges recoverable ; as it requires a consideration of one dollar, though confessedly never paid, to be inserted as paid in the deed conveying landed property. As this circumstance is universally known, the words in question may be regarded as a legal fiction. And the transaction will be free from moral guilt, provided that the nature of the note be avowed. The note in that case is to be considered merely as the instrument by which one man gives his guarantee for the payment of a debt contracted by another ; a thing which it is evidently fair that one man should do, when prudence permits, for another, if he knows his own guarantee to be sufficient, and does not attempt to make the transaction appear different from what it really is.

On the other hand, it is never to be forgotten how easily such notes may be fabricated for the purpose of deceit, and also multiplied without limit. It may be prudent, therefore, in ordinary cases, to abstain from them alto-



and each trusting to maintain his ground by the repetition of a similar proceeding when the time for paying the bill shall arrive.

#### DUTY OF THE MERCHANT TOWARDS BEGINNERS IN TRADE.

Every extensive merchant has it also in his power to be of material service to traders, especially to young beginners, by assisting them with his advice as to forming partnerships; as to the mode of conducting various parts of their business, and the best means of preserving and making the most advantageous use of their credit; and by conveying to them information concerning the character of those with whom they deal, and of those whom they trust. Let him seek to obtain general knowledge on those subjects for the purpose of making this use of it.

---

gether. If notes are given between merchants only for goods sold and delivered, the amount of such bills in circulation cannot exceed the amount of debts in the way of actual trade; and this amount the drawers are likely to be able to pay. The principle, therefore, of distinguishing notes of accommodation from notes in trade or business notes, as they are called, seems very good as a principle of limitation. But the distinction frequently eludes all the researches of the bank director.

**DUTY OF THE MERCHANT TOWARDS THE MERCANTILE COMMUNITY.**

It is also very much in the power, and it ought constantly to be the object, of a merchant, to contribute towards purifying trade in general from fraudulent and discreditable practices. By showing encouragement and giving preferences to honest and industrious traders and manufacturers; by standing forward as far as truth will authorise him in support of their character and credit; by rejecting customers whose conduct in trade has been notoriously flagitious; by refusing assistance and countenance to adventurous speculators, to the extravagant, the rapacious, the tricking, and the profligate; by laying disadvantages in the way of dealers in contraband goods; by activity in bringing to justice swindlers and forgers; a single individual may effect extensive and most substantial good. On the contrary, by remissness in attending to these and similar opportunities of usefulness, and much more by wilfully disregarding or perverting them through eagerness for his own profit; he co-operates in sanctioning the abuses and the crimes with which he finds trade contaminated, and in transmitting them forward to distant generations. The insight which his business gives him into the nature of all kinds

of trade (an insight which he will do well to cultivate for the sake of the laudable and beneficial purpose to which it may be applied); and the knowledge which he necessarily acquires of the affairs of those who deal with him, will add great weight to his advice; and will enable him to exert an influence, not only on the mercantile and commercial proceedings, but even on the moral character, of numbers with whom he is connected.

#### DUTY OF THE MERCHANT TOWARDS CLERKS AND DEPENDANTS.

If merit ought to receive encouragement from a merchant wherever it is found, it has surely a peculiar claim upon him when found in his own house. On this principle, as well as for other reasons, clerks, whose honesty and diligence have long been experienced, are fitly rewarded by being taken, if circumstances suit, into partnership. It is a reward which will not only be highly grateful to themselves, but one which will make young men of good characters anxious to come into their place; and will add greatly to the effect of that vigilant solicitude with which a merchant ought at all times to superintend the moral character of his subordinate assistants. The nature too of their past employment has been such as to render them perfectly qualified

to conduct the business of the house. Their acquaintance with the views and habits of the older partners may make their assistance in the management of it extremely desirable. And thus the latter may reap the advantage of being enabled to allow themselves a certain degree of relaxation from pecuniary concerns ; and to dedicate a greater portion of their time to domestic duties, to improving study, to liberal science, or to the service of their country as magistrates and members of the Legislature.

**DUTY OF INSURANCE AGAINST LOSSES BY  
FIRE AND AT SEA.**

The merchant, when he subjects himself to risks against which he might easily guard, acts an unjust part towards all who may be injured by his misfortunes. He acts unjustly, for example, if he forbears to insure his warehouse from fire, or any large adventure from the dangers of the sea ; thus exposing his creditors to the hazard of ruin by his temerity, that he may himself save a small per centage, by the payment of which he would have purchased an indemnification against the losses to which his goods are daily liable. In these rash practices young merchants are the most apt to indulge themselves ; and sometimes gain by them. But traders of every description

should remember, that all bold adventuring in those who traffic chiefly on credit, or with the money of others, is not rendered less criminal by the success of the experiment.

#### EXTORTION.

Neither is the merchant to be vindicated if he raises his general profits to a rate higher than is equitable, when compared with the general circumstances and hazards of his dealings. This rule does not prohibit him from taking a profit too great, if individually considered, on some of the articles in which he deals, when he finds himself unable to obtain an adequate advantage on others ; so long as his gains on the whole are not more than a fair compensation for the capital which he employs, the skill and industry which he exerts, and the risks and fluctuations which he encounters. But let not the difficulty of fixing the precise standard of individual profits, and the impossibility of that standard being known, or, if known, fitly estimated, by his customers, betray him into extortion. Neither let profit be pursued by means tinctured with immorality. Who could assert the integrity of a merchant who, in order to determine whether he should send his goods to a particular market, should bribe or seduce a person in a public office to vio-

late his duty, and betray to him the probability of peace or war? Could a man be pronounced honest and ingenuous who should attempt by giving money, by conferring favours, or even by flattering attention, to lead an agent, who comes to purchase an article, to connive at impositions on his unsuspecting principal? Could he be vindicated if he should send to his foreign correspondent goods from one manufactory; and at the same time take measures, directly or indirectly, by himself or in concurrence with others, to induce him to believe that they were fabricated at another; or if, on finding the market unfavourable for the sale of goods which he had ordered from abroad, he should falsely pretend that they were damaged, or not exactly according to his order, and sell them on account of the manufacturer? Such practices must be condemned by every upright man to whom they are stated. There are others at least as common, and not less reprehensible, which may require to be noticed. A few instances will be briefly commented upon; and the mercantile reader will then be left to apply similar reasoning to any other customs of his trade, to which he may deem it applicable.

#### SMUGGLING.

That the merchant acts in a manner altogether unjustifiable if he is concerned in smuggling, ad-

ventures, or knowingly sells articles which have been smuggled, is evident on this principle; that men in every situation are highly criminal, who themselves break, or who tempt others to transgress, the laws of their respective countries. But it is not always considered that this principle bears in a certain degree on the conduct of a merchant, if he furnishes goods to a third person who plainly intends to introduce them clandestinely into a foreign country where they are prohibited.

#### CREATING ARTIFICIAL PRICES.

Another mode of gaining profit, which ought universally to be reprobated, is that of creating artificial prices. There have been instances of merchants, when they meant immediately to dispose of a large quantity of a particular article, buying in the open market a little of the same article on very high terms; thus pretending to be purchasers, when in fact they were sellers, and endeavouring to create by their conduct in the former capacity, an unnatural and extravagant price, by which they might far overpay themselves in the latter. Similar frauds may be used in managing the rate of exchange with foreign countries. A merchant for instance, by purposely remitting a sum on losing terms, may cause a

variation in the rate, of which he stands ready to avail himself by instantly drawing back much larger sums. And there may be various other means of reaping very unwarrantable advantages by managing the price of exchange, and affecting by artful contrivances the daily printed statement of rates, according to which accounts with foreign correspondents are to be settled.

#### DUTY OF THE SHIPPING MERCHANT TOWARDS SAILORS.

We may conclude these observations with remarking, that as the promoting of any laudable design is in an especial manner required of those who have extraordinary opportunities of forwarding it; the correction of the profaneness and profligacy of our sailors ought to be near the hearts of merchants. By attention, as far as it is practicable, to the religious and moral character of the captains and officers employed in their vessels, by a regular distribution of proper books among the crews, and by the appointment of liberal premiums for virtuous behaviour, it seems probable that much good might gradually be effected.

The introduction, likewise, of civilization, and the diffusion of true religion among the inhabitants of remote and barbarous countries, are



objects which ought to be peculiarly regarded by a class of men, who above every other description of traders possess the means of accomplishing them.

PECULIAR DUTIES OF AN AGENT OR COMMISSION MERCHANT.

The predominant duty of an agent is to discharge with integrity, diligence, and punctuality, and with a marked attention to the interests of his employer, the commission with which he is entrusted. The rule by which he ought to try his conduct towards his principals, is by considering in each particular instance, whether he has acted in such a manner as he might reasonably have expected an agent of his own to act for him in a similar business. The duty and the rule are so obvious, that it is needless to dwell upon either of them. But it may be right to mention by way of example a few cases in which the agent is too frequently led to violate both the one and the other.

Of all the breaches of duty of which an agent can be guilty, there is perhaps not one so scandalous and flagrant as that to which I have had occasion to allude when speaking of merchants generally. I mean the being bribed by the expectation of some private or distant advantage to

himself (for an actual bribe is rarely the mode adopted) to connive at impositions on his employer. It is scarcely necessary to say, that the agent ought not only to withstand palpable temptations, but also to be on his guard against being blinded and misled by specious and indirect attempts to corrupt him. Conscience should not only be scrupulous, but quick-sighted.

Many of the reprehensible practices in which some agents indulge themselves, though appearing in different shapes under different circumstances, may be traced to one source; the custom of taking unavowed and unauthorized profits, in addition to the regular and settled price allowed for transacting the business, and generally called the commission. Men more ingenious than honest devise various methods of gaining these unlawful advantages. An agent, for instance, of that description is directed by a distant correspondent to receive and to convey to him a sum of money owing to him from a third person. He gets the money into his hands with all imaginable speed, and so far punctually discharges his duty; but he is slow in communicating to his employer the receipt of the debt, and perhaps even intimates to him indirectly that the demand is yet unsatisfied, while he is putting the money out to interest, or using it in some other way, for his own benefit.

The custom of taking profits in the commission business, which are not stated in account to the principal, and would appear unjustifiable if the conduct of the agent were fully laid open to him, is not only contrary to the strict rules of commercial integrity and fair dealing; but even in cases where it is free from actual deceit, it opens a door and furnishes precedents for a variety of little frauds, which are but too apt to insinuate themselves into trading transactions, and involve them in general discredit and suspicion. The importance of clearing the mercantile character from this species of disrepute, makes it very desirable that the reader should be impressed with the criminality of the practices from which such imputations have arisen. The agent, therefore, should introduce all practicable openness into his transactions. The bad effects which a system of concealment tends to produce on the morals of his clerks, through the influence of his example at least, if not of his positive directions, are neither to be forgotten nor to be disregarded. To abandon secret and unauthorized advantages is also a probable method of ultimately promoting his emolument, by proving him to be a man in whom confidence may safely be reposed.

## THE MERCHANT'S CONDUCT UNDER REVERSES.

It is weak to be scared at difficulties, seeing that they generally diminish as they are approached, and oftentimes even entirely vanish. No man can tell what he can do, till he tries. It is impossible to calculate the extent of human powers ; it can only be ascertained by experiment. What has been accomplished by parties and by solitary individuals in the torrid and the frozen regions, under circumstances the most difficult and appalling, should teach us that, when we ought to attempt, we should never despair. The reason why men oftener succeed in overcoming uncommon difficulties, than ordinary ones, is, that in the first case they call into action the whole of their resources, and that in the last they act upon calculation, and generally under-calculate. Where there is no retreat, and the whole energy is forward, the chances are in favour of success ; but a backward look is full of danger. Confidence of success is almost success : and obstacles often fall of themselves before a determination to overcome them. There is something in resolution which has an influence beyond itself, and it marches on like a mighty lord amongst its slaves ; all is prostration where it appears. When

bent on good, it is almost the noblest attribute of men; when on evil, the most dangerous. It is by habitual resolution that men succeed to any great extent; impulses are not sufficient. What is done at one moment is undone the next; and a step forward is nothing gained, unless it is followed up.

Still with every precaution reverses may come. Every man should admit the possibility of them, and should endeavour to prepare his mind for encountering them with fortitude, and resisting their undue action on the spirits.

Many particulars respecting the conduct which it is right to pursue when his affairs become embarrassed, have already been explained under the head of the merchant's duties. What we have now to say will consist of a few brief remarks respecting the means of sustaining his honour and his intellectual vigour, when misfortunes are pressing heavily upon him, and he is ready to sink under the pressure.

In the first place, it is necessary for him to remember that he is in the hands of the Great Disposer of events, who has a wise and beneficent purpose in every affliction which he permits to fall upon the sons of men; that the object of his existence in this world is a preparation for a better; that adversity, like prosperity, is a neces-

sary part of the moral discipline which all receive who become eminent in virtue ; that, if affliction had not fallen upon him in the shape of commercial reverses, it might have come in some form which would have proved much more severe, leaving his fire-side desolate, and crushing the loveliest and dearest blossoms of hope ; in short, that it is easy to imagine far more terrible misfortunes than the mere disappointment of his hopes in business.

Having calmed his mind by a consideration of his condition and relations as a moral and responsible being ; and firmly rested his hopes on the support of Heaven in his hour of trial ; let him diligently survey every circumstance of his worldly condition, and look around for the means of commencing the world anew.

Much, indeed most of his resources in this crisis will depend upon the line of conduct which he has observed during the decline and fall of his house. If, through the whole, he has preserved his integrity unsoiled and his honour unimpeached, his task will now be comparatively easy. Friends will be ready to proffer the hand of support and the smile of encouragement, and creditors will be ready to give him every reasonable indulgence. But some merchants are induced by a false pride or a worse motive to resort to such mean expedients

and dishonourable practices to sustain a declining credit, that when the final crash comes, every friend has been alienated, and those who, had he behaved honourably throughout, would have come forward to the rescue, now stand aloof and look on his struggles, with folded arms.

The poor fellow, in such a case, must begin his new career at the very bottom of the hill, for he has not only a new fortune, but a new character to create; and bitterly will he learn by experience that confidence is a plant of tardy growth. Nevertheless, even the man who has been tempted to do wrong in this respect, and who has lost friends by his misconduct, must not despair. It must be his aim to show that misfortune has bettered his principles, and that he is determined to merit confidence by a thorough reform.

Let every young man in business who may read these pages remember, however, that when he shall see difficulties approaching, then—then is the time to put a double guard upon his virtue, then is the time to carry out every principle of commercial integrity in its strictest interpretation. Then, especially, should this motto be inflexibly adhered to, *Be just and fear not*. Then should he most firmly resolve to *do right*, and leave the result in the hands of Providence.

Of the duty of frequently examining his books and keeping himself constantly aware of the precise situation of his affairs, we have already spoken. On the supposition that the merchant adheres to this practice, he must become aware of the fact whenever unexpected losses shall have rendered him actually insolvent. On such an emergency, he should instantly call his oldest and best friends together, and lay the state of his affairs before them. If they make up his losses and save him from bankruptcy, *effectually*, all is well. But let him not be induced by the advice of any one to resort to any temporary expedients for keeping up appearances, *a little longer*. He should remember, that it is as really his duty to stop payment, and divide his property among his creditors, when he is actually insolvent, as it is to pay the uttermost farthing when he is solvent. The want of a clear understanding on this point, and of a resolution to abide by the strict letter of moral duty on the same point, has led many a merchant into a course of conduct which has ruined both his fortune and his character, when the latter might have been easily saved;—well saved, too, in a temporal point of view, since it would have constituted the best capital for a new start in business.

When a merchant's affairs are embarrassed,



one of the most vexatious annoyances, to which he is exposed, is the liability of being involved in expensive and tedious law-suits. The loss of money, time, character and temper attending law-suits, is beyond all calculation; so that the best policy for one who attaches a high value to all these, is to avoid "getting into the law," as it is termed, as he would avoid the plague. It is better to make a sacrifice of a moderate sum to avoid a law-suit, than to run the risk of a much greater loss of money, to say nothing of time and temper, by going to law. Every man in extensive business, of course has frequent occasion for the advice of an experienced and upright lawyer, with respect to titles, contracts, &c. Such an adviser is usually retained by a prudent merchant, for the express purpose of giving him the counsel which will best enable him to avoid law-suits. The advice of an honest and skilful attorney should be sought, with regard to every step which a merchant takes, when labouring under embarrassments and reverses; and in making his selection, we would recommend our reader to choose the attorney who has the reputation of keeping his clients clear of law-suits, as long as it is possible to avoid them.

Our remarks, under this head, as under all others, are necessarily of a very general nature,

as the circumstances in which different individuals may be placed are too various to admit of our attempting to go into details. There is one point, however, to which we would advert before quitting this part of our subject. This is the conduct of a distressed merchant in his domestic relations. As “the prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself,” the prudent merchant will always be careful that the partner of his worldly fortunes, who *should be* his steadiest friend, is frequently reminded in prosperity that misfortunes may come. When they do come, he will not withhold from her the fullest confidence. We need not the unanimous consent of poets and orators to assure us that the virtue of woman shines out, in its greatest lustre, in the hour of adversity. Then it is that true affection is tried. Then it is that a man finds himself possessed of a treasure which he knew not of;—the delicate and tender being whom he has never permitted “the winds of heaven to visit too roughly,” suddenly displays a strength of character, an unyielding spirit of endurance and perseverance, of which no one could have supposed her capable. A woman who truly loves her husband regards his affection and his *honour* as her dearest earthly treasures. For the preservation of those she will endure any privation, bear any reverse, encounter any labour.

Such being the fact, it becomes the merchant's duty, when cares press and dangers threaten, to make full disclosures to his wife respecting them, and also to take care that no pressure of outward ills shall be allowed to disturb the serenity of *home*. Let the sun of religious hope and the dews of pure affection fall gently on that dear sanctuary, while the storm threatens abroad; and when at last the winds and thunders come, it will afford a secure retreat. If the defeated king could proudly say in his captivity, "*all is lost but our honour*," the merchant who has acted thus wisely, may say in his adversity "*all is lost but my honour and my HOME*."—The peace and affection which he has thus preserved unimpaired, comprehend all that is most essential in that grand solace of the wounded spirit.

They who have passed through the fiery trial, well know the truth of the principles and the wisdom of the cautions which we have advanced under this head. We could easily fill up the remainder of the volume with authorities in support of the truth of these general remarks. But our young readers, we trust, will believe them on our simple assertion. If they are not disposed to yield us implicit credence, we confidently refer them to those within the circle of their own acquaintance who have learnt the hard lesson of experience.

## THE MERCHANT'S RECREATIONS.

It is by no means our purpose, under the present head of our subject, to comment on the respective merits of the ordinary modes of amusement. Riding, shooting, fishing, rowing, &c. we hardly deem it worth our while to be at the trouble of recommending. The merchant, in common with others, will occasionally resort to these modes of pastime according to his ability and inclination. It comes more directly within the limits of our design, to glance at a few of those recreations which we consider peculiarly appropriate for the liberal votary of commerce, and to commend these to his special favour.

In our remarks on education, and on the merchant's duties, we noticed the advantages resulting from the cultivation of a taste for science, literature and the arts. The young man who acquires such a taste in early life will never be at a loss for modes of recreation. The merchant who is satisfied with the perusal of such works as have a direct bearing on his own profession will find his course of reading by no means narrow or unworthy of attention. The history and principles of commerce, the origin and nature of the various foreign products in

which he deals, the history and statistics of manufactures, foreign and domestic, and the science of political economy, all form subjects of study and inquiry to which his attention is naturally directed by his daily pursuits. That such studies are often pursued with success by merchants, is sufficiently attested by the works relating to them, which merchants have written. The ablest work on political economy which made its appearance in his time was written by a gentleman engaged in the active pursuits of commerce, the celebrated Mr. Ricardo, of London; and the works on the same subject, which are now attracting the greatest attention, both here and in Europe, are the productions of a gentleman of Philadelphia, who has but recently retired from a partnership in one of the most extensive book-selling houses in the country.

But it is not merely those subjects of study which relate directly to commerce,—the literature, so to speak, of commerce, which form a suitable relaxation from the cares of business. Subjects the most remote from it are equally serviceable as a relief to the mind, wearied with the toils of business and calculation. Poetry, history and the principles of the fine arts, are among the elegant recreations to which merchants have successfully turned their attention. Our readers

will readily remember instances in which these have been pursued with pleasure, as subjects of occasional reading, and with success as subjects of serious study, without in any degree encroaching on the business hours or impairing the credit of the merchant. Charles Sprague, of Boston, notwithstanding his poetical celebrity, is still one of the most industrious and respectable men in his profession; Mr. Roscoe was a busy and successful merchant, while his historical works were attracting the attention and admiration of the literary world; Mr. Angerstein indulged his taste for the fine arts, without impairing either his credit or his estate; and Mr. Biddle is at this moment in the first rank, both as a banker, and a writer in the department of elegant literature. Mr. Roscoe was not only a busy merchant, but a very active and spirited promoter of the liberal and useful public institutions of his native city.

“As I was once visiting the Athenæum of Liverpool,” says the elegant author of the Sketch Book, “my attention was attracted by a person who had just entered the room. He was advanced in life, tall, and of a form that would once have been commanding, but it was a little bowed by time, perhaps by care. He had a noble style of countenance; a head that would have pleased a painter, and though some slight furrows upon his

brow showed wasting thought had been busy there, yet his eye still beamed with the fire of a prophetic soul. There was something in his whole appearance, that indicated a being of a superior order from the bustling race around him. I inquired his name, and was informed that it was Roscoe. I drew back with an involuntary feeling of veneration. This, then, was an author of celebrity; this was one of those men whose voices have gone forth to the ends of the earth, with whose minds I have communed even in the solitudes of America.

“Accustomed as we are in our native land, to know European writers only by their works, we cannot conceive of them as of other men, engrossed by trivial or sordid pursuits, and jostling with the crowd of common minds in the dusty paths of life. They pass before our imaginations like superior beings, radiant with the emanations of their own genius, and surrounded by a halo of literary glory.

“To find the elegant historian of the Medici, therefore, mingling among the busy sons of traffic, at first shocked my poetical ideas; but it is from the very circumstances and situation in which he has been placed, that Mr. Roscoe derives his highest claim to admiration. It is interesting to notice how some minds seem almost

to create themselves, springing up under every disadvantage, and working their solitary but irresistible way through a thousand obstacles. Nature seems to delight in disappointing the cherishing assiduities of art, with which it would rear legitimate dulness to maturity, and to glory in the luxuriance of her chance productions. She scatters the seeds of genius to the winds; and though some may perish among the stony places of the world, and some be choked by the thorns and brambles of early adversity, yet others will now and then strike root even in the clefts of the rock; struggle bravely up into sun-shine; and spread over their sterile birth-place all the beauties of vegetation.

“Such has been the case with Roscoe. Born in a situation apparently ungenial to the growth of literary talent, in the very market-place of trade, without fortune, family connexion, or patronage; self-prompted, self-sustained, and almost self-taught; he has conquered every obstacle, achieved his way to eminence, and having become one of the ornaments of the nation, has turned the whole force of his talents and influence to advance and embellish his native town.

“Indeed it is this last trait in his character, which has given him interest in my eyes, and induced me particularly to point him out to my



countrymen. Eminent as are his literary merits, he is but one among the many distinguished authors of this intellectual nation. They, however, live but in general for their own fame, or their own pleasures. Their private history presents no lessons to the world, or perhaps a humiliating one of human frailty and inconsistency. At best, they are prone to steal away from the bustle and common-place of busy existence, to indulge in the selfishness of lettered ease, and revel in the scenes of mental but exclusive enjoyment.

“Mr. Roscoe, on the contrary, has claimed none of the accorded privileges of talent. He has shut himself up in no garden of thought, or elysium of fancy, but has gone forth into the highways and thorough-fares of life; he has planted bowers by the wayside, for the refreshment of the pilgrim and the sojourner; and has established pure fountains, where the labouring man may turn aside from the dust and heat of the day, and drink of the living streams of knowledge. There is a “daily beauty in his eye,” on which mankind may meditate and grow better. It exhibits no lofty and almost useless, because inimitable, examples of excellence; but presents a picture of active, yet simple and imitable virtues, which are within every man’s reach, but

which few men exercise, or this world would be a Paradise.

“But his private life is peculiarly worthy the attention of the citizen of our young and busy country, where literature and the elegant arts must grow up side by side with the coarser plants of daily necessity, and must depend for their culture, not upon the exclusive devotion of time and wealth, or the quickening rays of titled patronage, but upon hours and seasons snatched from the pursuits of worldly interests, by intelligent and public-spirited individuals.

“He has shown how much may be done in hours of leisure by one master spirit for a place, and how completely it can give its own impress to surrounding objects. Like his own Lorenzo de Medici, on whom he seems to have fixed his eye, as on a pure model of antiquity, he has woven the history of his life with the history of his own native town, and made the foundations of its fame the monuments of its virtues. Wherever you go in Liverpool, you perceive traces of his foot-steps in all that is elegant and liberal. He found the tide of wealth flowing merely in the channels of trade; he has diverted from it, invigorating rills to refresh the gardens of literature. By his own example, and constant exertions, he has brought into effect that union of

commerce and the intellectual pursuits, so eloquently recommended in one of his latest writings, an address upon the opening of the Liverpool Institution, and has practically proved how beautifully they may be brought to harmonize and to benefit each other. The noble institutions for literary and scientific purposes, which reflect such credit upon Liverpool, and are giving such an impulse to the public mind, have been mostly originated, and all effectively promoted, by Mr. Roscoe; and when we consider the rapid increasing opulence and magnitude of that town, which promises to vie in commercial importance with the metropolis, it will be perceived, that in awakening an ambition of mental improvement among its inhabitants, he has effected a great benefit to the cause of British literature.

“In America, we only know Mr. Roscoe as the author; in Liverpool, he is spoken of as the banker, and I was told of his being unfortunate in business. I could not pity him as I heard some rich men do. I considered him far above the reach of my pity. Those who live only in the world, and for the world, may be cast down by the frowns of adversity; but a man like Roscoe is not to be overcome by the mutations of fortune: They do but drive him in upon the resources of his own mind, to the superior society

of his own thoughts, which the best of men are apt sometimes to neglect, and to roam abroad in search of less worthy associates. He is independent of the world around him. He lives with antiquity and posterity; with antiquity in the sweet communion of studious retirement, and with posterity in the generous aspiring after future renown. The solitude of such a mind is the state of its highest enjoyment. It is then visited by those elevated meditations which are the proper aliment of noble minds, and are like manna sent from heaven to the wilderness of this world.

“ While my feelings were yet alive upon this subject, it was my fortune to light upon further traces of Mr. Roscoe. I was riding out with a gentleman to view the environs of Liverpool, when he turned off through a gate into some ornamental grounds. After riding a short distance, we came to a spacious mansion of freestone, built in the Grecian style. It was not in the purest taste, yet it had an air of elegance, and the situation was delightful. A fine lawn sloped away from it, studded with clumps of trees, so disposed as to break a soft fertile country into a variety of landscapes. The Mersey was seen winding a broad quiet sheet of water through an expanse of green meadow-land; while

the Welsh mountains, blending with clouds, and melting into distance, bordered the horizon.

“This was Roscoe’s favourite residence during the days of his prosperity. It had been the seat of elegant hospitality and retirement. The house was now silent and deserted.”

The Medici family, some of whose illustrious members formed the subjects of Mr. Roscoe’s most celebrated historical works, afford another instance of the respectability and usefulness of liberal-minded merchants.

“From the bosom of commerce sprung the illustrious family of Medici, which in celebrity has eclipsed those of almost all the sovereigns of Europe. John de Medici, whose influence and ascendancy in the councils of the commonwealth arose not more from his vast possessions, than from his virtue and beneficence, was the first banker and merchant of Italy. Cardinal Colonna, after his elevation to the chair of St. Peter, by the name of Martin the Fifth, when reduced to apply to him for pecuniary assistance, scrupled not to pledge to him the pontifical crown; and afterwards created him Duke of Monteverdi. At his death, notwithstanding the immense treasures which he bequeathed to his family, yet so boundless had been his largesses and donations to the necessitous among his fellow-citizens, that he was

attended to the grave by a prodigious concourse of his weeping countrymen, and honoured with the title of "Father of the Poor." Cosmo, his eldest son, succeeded to his virtues, and far excelled him in strength of genius, power, and reputation. Banished from Florence by a triumphant faction, he was recalled only to enjoy an augmented degree of public confidence. His influence, always exerted to produce the most beneficial and laudable effects, attained a strength and solidity which no despotism could have conferred. Constantly engaged in commerce, he employed and enriched a multitude of persons, who in return sustained his own greatness. His vessels traded to every port; and his factors at Constantinople, Cairo, and along the coasts of Lesser Asia, enjoyed the most distinguished consideration. The Sultans of Egypt, the Emirs of Babylon, and the Turkish Emperors, were all connected with him by commercial ties. The Palæologi, in whose family expired the Empire of Constantinople, sold him the jewels and splendid furniture of the imperial palaces, during the state of depression to which they were reduced previous to their final destruction by Mahomet the Second. To the claims to the admiration of his contemporaries and of posterity which commerce and riches could confer, Cosmo added

another by his princely protection of letters. The memorable era, distinguished by the name of "the age of the Medici," commenced with Cosmo, and forms an epoch in the annals of literature. His house was the asylum of genius and talents, from every part of Italy and Greece. The most precious manuscripts, preserved by his care from the barbarous rage of the Turks, and purchased by his order, were transmitted to future times. Numbers of learned men, driven by the Turkish Sultans to take refuge in Florence and other Italian states, received from his bounty a liberal provision, and repaid him by their grateful eulogiums. More fortunate in the close of life than Pericles, Cosmo, after having presided during thirty years over the republic, during which time he embellished the capital with monuments of utility and magnificence, expired at a very advanced age, free from the infirmities with which it is usually accompanied. His memory was inexpressibly dear to his countrymen, who, by a public decree, inscribed on his tomb the glorious title of "Father of his Country."

We have already adverted to Mr. Ricardo. His life furnishes an example exactly in point to our present purpose, since it shows how naturally the pursuits of commerce are allied to those of liberal science and literature. His case is so

perfectly apposite, that we will quote a sketch of his life, and thus teach more effectually by example than we can by mere precept.

In the early history of Mr. Ricardo's life there is nothing, the relation of which would be likely to excite either attention or interest. His father, a native of Holland, and of very respectable connexions, went over on a visit to England, when young, and preferring it to his own, became naturalized, and settled there. He entered the Stock Exchange; and being a man of good natural abilities, and of the strictest honour and integrity, made a corresponding progress; acquiring a respectable fortune, and possessing considerable influence within the circle in which he moved. He married, and was the father of a very numerous family, of which David, the subject of the present memoir, was the third. He was born on the 19th of April, 1772; and in point of education had the same advantages which are usually allotted to those who are destined for a mercantile line of life. When very young, he was sent to Holland. His father, who had designed him to follow the same business in which he was engaged, and whose transactions lay chiefly in that country, sent him thither not only with a view to his becoming acquainted with it, but also that he might be placed at a school of which he enter-



tained a very high opinion. After two years' absence he returned home, and continued the common-school education till his father took him into business. At his intervals of leisure, he was allowed any masters for private instruction whom he chose to have: but he had not the benefit of what is called a classical education; and it is doubtful whether it would have been a benefit to him, or whether it might not have led his mind to a course of study, in early life, foreign to those habits of deep thinking, which in the end enabled him to develope the most abstruse and intricate subjects, and to be the author of important discoveries, instead of receiving passively the ideas of others.

It is not true, however, as has been more than insinuated, that Mr. Ricardo was of very low origin, and that he had been wholly denied the advantages of education; a reflection upon his father which he by no means deserved. The latter was always in affluent circumstances, most respectably connected, and both able and willing to afford his children all the advantages which the line of life for which they were destined appeared to require.

In the early years of Mr. Ricardo but little appeared in his intellectual progress, which would have led even an acute observer to predict his

future eminence. But after having seen him attain that station, they who have passed through life with him from his boyish days now bring to their recollection circumstances, which, though overlooked as trivial at the time, serve to show that the plentiful harvest was the natural consequence of a genial spring.

In very early life he was remarkable for solidity and steadiness of character. At the age of fourteen his father began to employ him in the Stock Exchange, where he placed great confidence in him, and gave him such power as is rarely granted to persons considerably older than himself. At the age of sixteen he was entrusted with the care of two of his younger brothers, to convey them to Holland; and neither his father nor his mother felt the smallest anxiety for the charge which was confided to him. When young, Mr. Ricardo showed a taste for abstract and general reading; and though he was without any inducement to its cultivation, or rather lay under positive discouragement, yet at the age of nineteen and twenty, works of that description which occasionally occupied his attention afforded him amusement and cause for reflection. Even at this time his mind disclosed a propensity to go to the bottom of the subjects by which it was attracted, and he showed the same manly and open

adherence to the opinions which he had deliberately formed, and the same openness to conviction which distinguished his maturer years.

His father was a man of good intellect, but uncultivated. His prejudices were exceedingly strong ; and they induced him to take the opinions of his forefathers in points of religion, politics, education, &c., upon faith, and without investigation. Not only did he adopt this rule for himself, but he insisted on its being followed by his children ; his son, however, never yielded his assent on any important subject, until after he had thoroughly investigated it. It was perhaps in opposing these strong prejudices, that he was first led to that freedom and independence of thought for which he was so remarkable, and which indeed extended itself to the other branches of his family.

Soon after he had attained the age of twenty-one, Mr. Ricardo married ; and this threw him upon his own resources, as he quitted his father at the same time. The general estimation in which he was held now manifested itself. All the most respectable members of the Stock Exchange came forward to testify the high opinion they entertained of him, with their eagerness to assist him in his undertakings.

His father's name stood as high as possible for

honour and integrity, qualities of the first recommendation in a field where transactions of the utmost magnitude rest upon them as their only security. Sharing this character with his father, and possessing talents and other excellent qualities which had endeared him to all, he embarked with the fairest prospect of success. This success answered his most sanguine expectations; and in a very few years, certainly not wholly without some anxiety at first, he had secured to himself a handsome independence. During this time his mind was chiefly occupied by his business; but as his solicitude for its success lessened, he turned his attention to other subjects.

At this time, or about the age of twenty-five, by the example and instigation of a friend with whom he was then very intimate, his leisure hours were devoted to some of the branches of mathematics, chemistry, geology, and mineralogy. He fitted up a laboratory, formed a collection of minerals, and was one of the original members of the Geological Society, but he never entered very warmly into the study of these subjects, as his interest in them totally vanished, when he became deeply involved in the investigation of his favourite topic.

The talent for obtaining wealth is not held in much estimation, but perhaps in nothing did Mr.

Ricardo more evince his extraordinary powers than he did in his business. His complete knowledge of all its intricacies; his surprising quickness at figures and calculation; his capability of getting through, without any apparent exertion, the immense transactions in which he was concerned; his coolness and judgment, combined certainly with (for him) a fortunate tissue of public events, enabled him to leave all his contemporaries at the Stock Exchange far behind, and to raise himself infinitely higher, not only in fortune, but in general character and estimation, than any man had ever done before in that house. Such was the impression that these qualities had made upon his competitors, that several of the most discerning among them, long before he had emerged into public notoriety, prognosticated, in their admiration, that he would live to fill some of the highest stations in the state.

It was not till Mr. Ricardo was somewhat advanced in life that he turned his attention to the subject of political economy. While on a visit at Bath, where he was staying for the benefit of Mrs. Ricardo's health, he took up, and read, the work of Adam Smith. It pleased him; and it is probable that the subject from that time occupied, with the other objects of his curiosity, a share of his thoughts, though it was not till some years

after that he appeared to have fixed upon it much of his attention.

The immense transactions which he had with the Bank of England, in the course of business, tallying with the train of study on which he was then engaged, led Mr. Ricardo to reflect upon the subject of the currency, to endeavour to account for the difference which existed between the value of the coin and the Bank notes, and to ascertain from what cause the depreciation of the latter arose. This occupied much of his attention at the time, and it formed a frequent theme of conversation with those among his acquaintance who were inclined to enter upon it. He was induced to put his thoughts upon paper, without the remotest view at the time to publication.

The late Mr. Perry, proprietor of the *Morning Chronicle*, was one of the few friends to whom Mr. Ricardo showed his manuscript. Mr. Perry urged him to allow it to be published in the *Morning Chronicle*; to which, not without some reluctance, Mr. Ricardo consented; and it was inserted in the shape of letters under the signature of R., the first of which appeared on the 6th day of September, 1810. These letters produced various answers; among the rest was one signed by "A Friend to Bank Notes, &c.," whom Mr. Ricardo soon after found to be an intelligent friend

of his own ; and who, from being a warm opponent of the doctrines of Mr. Ricardo, was soon transformed into a complete convert to them.

The interest which the subject excited was a motive with him for enlarging upon it, and publishing his views very shortly after, in the form of a pamphlet, entitled "On the Depreciation of the Currency." Many were the publications which this elicited, some in defence of, and some in opposition to it. To one by Mr. Bosanquet he replied, but not so much with a view to refute the arguments which that gentleman advanced, as to give still further and stronger support to opinions which he thought of great practical utility. Some time after, the late Mr. Horner brought the question before Parliament, and obtained a committee to investigate the subject ; the result of the inquiry was a confirmation of Mr. Ricardo's doctrines. The famous Bullion Report coincided mainly with his pamphlet ; and the facts elicited from the evidence collected by the committee afforded practical illustrations of the accuracy of his speculation.

By some, the credit of originating the bullion question is given to Mr. Horner ; but though much is due to him for his patient and persevering investigation of the subject, and the very able manner in which he drew up the report, yet to Mr.

Ricardo the credit of developing the doctrine of money, in its present perfect state, is mainly to be ascribed.

Among the other effects of this pamphlet, it is not surprising that it should have been the means of introducing Mr. Ricardo to a number of first-rate literary characters. His society was courted by many, and his talents were duly appreciated by all who knew him. About this time, too, he became acquainted with Mr. Mill, the distinguished author of "The History of British India;" an acquaintance which ultimately grew into a warm and sincere attachment. With very few exceptions,—perhaps with none,—Mr. Mill of all men possessed the greatest influence over him. Mr. Ricardo always considered him as a man of the first intellectual capacity; and his judgment, his discrimination, and his opinion had greater weight with him than any other person's. This feeling appeared to be mutual; and the opinion which Mr. Ricardo entertained of Mr. Mill, it was easy to see, was equalled by the esteem in which he was held by his friend.

Mr. Ricardo's next essay was on Rent; and the suggestions of Mr. Malthus, who had previously written upon the same subject, were followed up by him so ably, and the true nature of rent



was so admirably expounded, that there was nothing further left for explanation upon that point.

It is well known that Mr. Grenfell for some time had been engaged, as a member of parliament, in the investigation of the affairs of the Bank. Mr. Ricardo took great interest in his proceedings. As his reputation was now high as a writer on the subject of money, he was urged to lend his aid to the work, which was so laudably begun. He expressed great reluctance, from that unfeigned distrust of himself with which he was habitually impressed; at last he yielded to persuasion, and his masterly exposition of the affairs of the Bank, together with his proposal for an economical currency, was the result. The high ascendancy which the Bank directors had acquired over the great mass of proprietors of Bank stock prevented those few who wished to have their transactions examined into from gaining their point. Many ineffectual attempts had been made: the majority of proprietors still supported the wish of the directors for secrecy; and they, shielding themselves behind that majority, withheld all account of their accumulated gains. Mr. Ricardo took a view of their various transactions; showed what their annual savings ought to have been; and, following up the examination to the time at which he wrote, clearly pointed out

to what, under proper management, their accumulation would have amounted.

In this pamphlet, Mr. Ricardo suggested his plan for an economical currency. If there was any suggestion which emanated from him, upon which he seemed to pride himself more than any other, it was certainly this; and his wish to see it brought into effect at the time, induced him to step out of his usual course. He addressed a letter to Mr. Perceval, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, upon the subject; but that gentleman expressed his dissent from Mr. Ricardo's opinions, and on that account declined adopting his advice.

Mr. Ricardo's next undertaking was his work on the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation,—a work abounding with as strong marks of deep thought, and masterly comprehension of a difficult subject, as any that was ever published. The train of arguments is derived from a few luminous principles, and one is so consequent upon another, that the work cannot be examined in detail: it must be taken as a whole, and as such, its conclusions are demonstrated with almost mathematical precision. Mr. Ricardo never courted notoriety: at first he shrunk from it, not so much because he undervalued it, as from a distrust, which not even success removed, of his powers. When he became sensible that he was

held in some estimation, he seemed satisfied with what he had obtained, and was unwilling to risk it by a desire to accomplish more. These considerations made him very reluctant, first to write, and afterwards to publish this work; and it was only by the successive urgings of some of his most confidential friends, but particularly through the influence of Mr. Mill, that he was at length prevailed upon to do so. The success which followed amply compensated him; and this book, upon a subject which had heretofore not been popular, in a very short time passed through three editions, and placed the author in the highest rank as a philosophical writer.

Mr. Ricardo had now wholly retired from business, with an ample fortune, acquired without exciting any of those envious and unpleasant feelings which usually attend upon those who precede their competitors. No one who knew him ever talked of his possessions without, at the same time, acknowledging that he had earned them fairly, and was worthy of them. In the year 1819, he became member of parliament for Port-arlington; and perhaps few men, in so short a time, ever attained such influence, and, without eloquence, commanded such attention as he did in the House of Commons. He never spoke upon any subjects, but with a view to communicate

ideas which he deemed important ; and then he always spoke to the point. He was of no party ; and at all times advocated such principles as he held to be sound and true, whether on the ministerial or the opposition side, or at variance with both. Attachment to party has generally made that neutral station a place of contempt, and those who have taken it have seldom obtained much consideration. Not so with Mr. Ricardo : his independence was truly appreciated. Not courting popularity, not wanting or seeking any thing from either side of the House, he stood aloof, and claimed the respect and admiration of both. His influence and his self-confidence were gaining ground. Had he lived, his utility would have kept pace with them. As it was, he left a void in the House, which there was no one to fill up. During the session, Mr. Ricardo's whole time was devoted to his duties as a member of parliament. His mornings were spent in study, in receiving visitors, in answering correspondents, or in attendance upon some committee ; and in the evening he never missed going to the House. During the recess, he usually retired to his seat at Gatcomb Park, in Gloucestershire, where, in the bosom of his family, he spent his time in the enjoyment of contributing to the happiness of all around him. In the recess of 1822 he went to the continent ;

travelled with his family through Holland, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, and returned home, after an absence of five months, through France.

Mr. Ricardo never appeared more cheerful, or in better health, than he did during his last retirement in the country, just previous to his death. This premature event was occasioned by an affection of the ear, which ultimately extended itself to the internal part of the head. Mr. Ricardo had for many years not been entirely free from this complaint, of which he thought but slightly ; for it had never before occasioned him any very serious inconvenience. He was attended through his last illness by one of his brothers, who had retired from the medical profession, and who was then on a visit to him. There were no symptoms that could excite the smallest anxiety about his recovery, till a very short time before his decease, when the transition was sudden, from perfect confidence to complete despair. He died on Thursday, the 11th of September, 1823, surrounded by his family, who had the misery of watching him throughout a whole day and night, expecting every moment to be his last. He was buried at Hardenhuish. The church and burying-ground are on the estate of Mr. T. Clutterbuck, Mr. Ricardo's son-in-law. It was always his wish to be buried in the most private manner, as

he disliked any thing like ostentation, and more particularly on such an occasion ; he was therefore followed to the grave only by his three sons, seven brothers, three sons-in-law, and three brothers-in-law. Mr. Hume, M. P., also attended, at his own particular request.

Mr. Ricardo left behind him a beloved wife and \* seven children, to bemoan the loss of one of the best of husbands, and most indulgent of fathers.

High as has been the testimony publicly borne to the merits of Mr. R. since his death, it has not exceeded what he deserved. His private worth kept pace with those public qualities which earned him so great an estimation. To intellectual powers of the first order, he joined a candour, a modesty, a diffidence, which never allowed him to assume to himself a merit which he felt he did not deserve ;—a love of justice which never permitted him to be influenced by his feelings, or biassed by any circumstances that might divert him from doing that which he thought strictly right ;—a disinterestedness which made him always regardless of his own personal benefit, in the maintenance of general principles. When a Bank proprietor, he argued strenuously and warmly against the inordinate gains of that body ;

---

\* One of his daughters died, shortly after her marriage, a few years ago.

he defended the cause of the fund-holders when he had ceased to be one; he was accused of an attempt to ruin the landed interest after he became a large landed proprietor; and while a member of parliament, he advocated the cause of reform, which, if adopted, would have deprived him of his seat. Superior to the misleading power of self-interest, his aim was the dissipation of erroneous, and the promulgation of true and correct principles, the adoption of which should tend to the amelioration of mankind, and the production of the greatest possible good. Such was Mr. Ricardo:—as a private character unexcelled; pre-eminent as a philosopher; and his public capacity a model of what a legislator ought to be.

---

The pursuit of literature, as a recreation, is not more congenial to the habits of a liberal-minded merchant, than the study of natural science and the fine arts. Some of the most beautiful collections of shells, minerals and other objects of natural history, have been made by individual merchants; and we have a recent example in Philadelphia, of a noble-minded merchant, devoting his time and capital in a far distant clime, to the formation of a splendid museum, which should enable his countrymen to form a correct idea of the costume and curiosities of a

great Asiatic empire. In this instance,\* we have an example of the benefits, which a liberal and enlightened merchant may confer upon the community in which he lives, by giving a proper direction to what may be considered his RECREATIONS.

The study and patronage of the fine arts, forms another suitable recreation for the merchant. The heavy debt which commerce owes the fine arts, has been very ably pointed out by Mr. Carey, in his interesting pamphlet on the subject, addressed to the Artist's Fund Society. By reference to his arguments, it will be seen that whenever a merchant devotes a portion of his income to the purchase of a picture from *a living artist*, he is doing a direct and important service to the general interests of his country's commerce, since he is thus contributing in the most efficient manner to elevate the standard of its ornamental arts. These ornamental arts, exactly in proportion as they are advanced towards perfection by the *artists* (properly so called) of the country, are appropriated to the embellishment of articles of luxury and utility by the

---

\* The Chinese Collection, formed by Nathan Dunn, Esq., of Philadelphia, during his residence in Canton, and recently opened at the Philadelphia Museum.



manufacturer, who, with the aid of the merchant, is thus enabled to lay foreign countries under contribution, and increase the wealth and importance of his own. The rich merchant, therefore, as well as the rich manufacturer, should make the study and patronage of the fine arts, a favourite recreation.

London could, not long since, boast of one merchant who did this to some purpose. This was Mr. Angerstein, to whose patronage of the fine arts we have already referred. His connection with Lloyd's famous coffee-house, as well as general celebrity in the mercantile world, will, perhaps, form a sufficient apology for dwelling a few moments on the circumstances of his life.

John Julius Angerstein was descended from a respectable Russian family, and was born at St. Petersburg, in the year 1735. About the year 1749 he came over to England, under the patronage of the late Andrew Thompson, Esq., an eminent Russian merchant.

Young Angerstein was employed during some years in Mr. Thompson's counting-house, and, when of age, was introduced by his worthy patron to Lloyd's. It can scarcely be necessary to add, that this is a coffee-house which derived its appellation from the circumstance of having been originally kept by a person of the name of Lloyd;

and that, many years ago, it became the resort of a considerable body of English merchants, and other men of business, especially brokers and underwriters, who assembled, as their successors to this day assemble, to divide among themselves, and to become responsible to one another for, the loss occasioned by ships being either captured, burnt, wrecked, or subjected to any other injury in the course of their voyages. Considering the immense value frequently trusted on the ocean in one bottom, such casualties would be too great for any individual to hazard, however extensive his property and enterprising his spirit.

In consequence of his natural abilities and unwearied application, added to the constant observance of the excellent master from whom he received his commercial education, Mr. Angerstein soon became eminent as a broker and underwriter. In this last character, when his name appeared on a policy, it was a sufficient recommendation for the rest of the underwriters to follow, without further examination. Policies sanctioned by his subscription speedily acquired so great an authority, that for some years they were, by way of distinction, called "Julians."

This celebrity daily increased. The circle of his connections in trade, and the powers of his vigorous and active mind, gradually expanded,

until Mr. Angerstein attained the highest degree of commercial importance. To reach that eminence, great personal sacrifices were necessary; but, steady to his purpose, none of the temptations by which youth is beset were powerful enough to seduce him from the regular pursuit of an object which demanded incessant toil and unwearied perseverance.

Previously to the erection of the present suite of apartments, the insurance business was carried on in a more circumscribed place in Pope's Head Alley. The frequenters of Old Lloyd's, finding the rooms extremely unhealthy, as well as inconvenient, on account of their size and situation, agreed to open a subscription for the purpose of obtaining a more suitable establishment. To carry this salutary measure into execution, a committee was appointed, and a considerable sum was raised, but a number of years elapsed before any great progress was made towards the accomplishment of so desirable an object. At length Mr. Angerstein called a meeting of the subscribers, and, having obtained their willing consent to invest him with a temporary authority, he, in his own name, procured for their accommodation the large and lofty apartments formerly occupied by the Company of the British Herring Fishery. When even these at last became too small, in conse-

quence of the increasing prosperity of the empire, he made a fresh purchase, and, by adding the Merchant Seamen's Office to the former, rendered it the most complete establishment of the kind in Europe. Great public good, as well as private advantage, resulted from his labours in this respect; for the magnitude and convenience of the new arrangement put an entire stop to the transaction of business in private offices scattered throughout the metropolis, and thus economized time, which is only another word for money, in the dictionary of an English merchant. In short, Lloyd's coffee-house has ever since been a kind of empire within itself—an empire of almost incalculable resources; and which, in conjunction with the grand mart of business below,\* holds commercial sway over the trading part of the universe.

Among the many great services which Mr. Angerstein rendered to the interests of this coffee-house, the following was by no means the least important. It was formerly but too common a practice, when vessels had acquired a bad name, from their imperfect state, to send them to some port where they were not known, and, by re-baptizing, to make them pass for ships of fair

---

\* The Royal Exchange.

character. To remedy this evil Mr. Angerstein applied for and obtained an Act of Parliament, by virtue of which every owner was prohibited from changing the name by which his vessel was originally distinguished. The benefit resulting from this measure is incredible.

Another prominent object of public good effected by the zeal and activity of Mr. Angerstein, was the issuing of a loan of exchequer bills for the relief of trade, in the year 1793. About that time there was an alarming want of confidence in the commercial world. This arose from a variety of causes, and, among the rest, the non-arrival of fleets, with remittances, long expected from various quarters. The existing situation of France, also, materially contributed to the depression of trade. To re-establish commercial credit, Mr. Angerstein exerted himself; and, after much opposition from some of the first merchants in the city, who were not so well convinced as himself of the benefits of the measure, he was the sole means of procuring from Mr. Pitt a loan through the medium of exchequer bills. This loan had for its purpose to assist merchants in partially realizing a sum of money to an immense amount, which lay dormant in colonial produce. The measure was found to be fully adequate to the exigency; yet it is but sim-

ple justice to remark, that Mr. Angerstein was quite disinterested in its operation and success, except as far as every good citizen may be said to be interested in the establishment and diffusion of public advantage.

It is greatly to Mr. Angerstein's honour, that he was the first who proposed a reward of two thousand pounds from the fund at Lloyd's, for that humane and meritorious invention, the life-boat, which has been the means of saving so many human beings from destruction.

During the commercial period of his life, Mr. Angerstein was connected in business with various individuals of great eminence in the city. The first firm was Angerstein and Dick; the second, Angerstein and Lewis; the third, Angerstein, Lewis, and Warren; and the last, Angerstein and Rivaz. It may give some notion of the extent of his transactions to state, that this last firm, Angerstein and Rivaz, made the largest insurance that ever was effected on one bottom; namely, the sum of 656,800*l.* on the *Diana* frigate, from Vera Cruz to England.

Having at length accumulated a princely fortune, Mr. Angerstein, on the 1st of August, 1811, retired from active life; and thenceforward divided his time chiefly between his house in Pall-Mall, and his delightful villa at Blackheath,

called Woodlands ; a spot which, although only a few miles from the metropolis, exhibits as many rural graces as can be found in the deepest recesses of the country. The grounds possess the most engaging irregularity and variety. The conservatory, in particular, is remarkable, as well for the magnificent yet simple construction of the building, as for the delicacy, richness, and multiplicity of the plants with which it is stored. In the centre of it stands a superb and lofty pine from Van Dieman's Land, for which Mr. Angerstein was once offered a thousand guineas.

Mr. Angerstein's gallery of pictures, at his house in Pall-Mall, has long been among the most celebrated in London ; surpassed by several in extent, but at least equal to any in excellence. The number of works of which it consists is forty-two, all of them first-rate productions. In collecting them, Mr. Angerstein spared no justifiable expense. Although his own natural taste generally enabled him to pronounce pretty accurately on the good or on the bad parts of any picture offered to his notice, yet he had not enjoyed those opportunities of observation and comparison which alone could have secured him from occasional imposition in the attainment of the object which he had in view ; and therefore, with his usual good sense, he sought the assistance of

a professional friend, on whose experience and judgment he knew he might safely rely. That friend was Sir Thomas Lawrence, the late accomplished President of the Royal Academy; between whom and Mr. Angerstein there existed, from a very early period of Sir Thomas's splendid career as an artist, the closest intimacy. Aided by Sir Thomas Lawrence's advice, and in two or three instances by that of Mr. West, late President of the Royal Academy, Mr. Angerstein gradually accumulated his admirable collection.

Thus surrounded by every thing that was beautiful and valuable in nature and in art, and enjoying the society of all the first characters of the age, whether remarkable for the superiority of their condition, or for the lustre of their talents and virtues, Mr. Angerstein continued to "crown a youth of labour with an age of ease," until he had attained nearly to his eighty-eighth year. His decease took place at Woodlands, on the 22d of January, 1823; after an indisposition of not more than a week; and he retained all his faculties to the last.

Mr. Angerstein was twice married. His first wife was the widow of Charles Crockatt, Esq., who had been left with two sons, and two daughters. By her he had one son, and one daughter; John, (formerly member of Parliament for the



Borough of Camelford,) who married the beautiful and amiable daughter of William Lock, Esq. of Norbury Park, by whom he has three sons and two daughters; and Juliana, who married General Nicholas Sablonkoff. It is highly honourable to Mr. Angerstein's feelings that his affections were equally divided between his own children and those of Mrs. Angerstein by her former husband. Mr. Angerstein's second wife was Mrs. Lucas, the widow of a respectable merchant, by whom he had no issue, and whom he survived many years.

The person of Mr. Angerstein was manly, noble, and commanding; his manners were easy, unaffected, and calculated to invite respect and confidence; his address was simple, but highly prepossessing; his conversation was open and ingenuous, without any mixture of disagreeable levity on the one hand, or of assumed gravity on the other; his countenance in particular was marked by those traits of beneficence which were reflected from his mind, and which shone so conspicuously in his numerous benefactions to the noblest, tenderest, and best of the charitable institutions which are the boast of Great Britain. And here it ought to be remarked, that although Mr. Angerstein's name was always one of the foremost in every loyal, patriotic, and benevolent

contribution, nothing could be more opposite to his character than the slightest parade or ostentation. He was actuated solely by an overflowing kindness of heart, and by an ardent love for that which, although not his native country, was the country of his adoption, of his residence during by far the greater part of his life, and of his affections. No man shrunk with more modesty and diffidence from the praise to which his good deeds, whether as a public or as a private individual, justly entitled him.

As a husband and parent, Mr. Angerstein was affectionate ; as a landlord, considerate and liberal. In him, the character of a liberal merchant was developed in the most honourable manner ; for as his wealth was drawn from trade, so was it freely expended in the protection and encouragement of the arts, and in the diffusion of knowledge. When industry is united with generosity and liberality, and commerce becomes the handmaid to civilization and science, they confer the highest honour and happiness on a country.

---

We trust that the examples of individual celebrity acquired by a proper selection of the merchant's recreations, will not be considered as having drawn us more into detail than was warranted by the nature and importance of the subject.

## THE MERCHANT'S REWARDS.

WE have imposed upon the merchant arduous *duties*; in the conscientious discharge of them he will realize large and rich rewards. The steady and constant acquisition of that wealth which affords the means of independence and active benevolence; the power of rewarding merit by giving employment, patronage and good advice; the distinction and consideration among men, which results from respectability of station and character; the possession of comfort and domestic felicity in a well-ordered home; and the opportunity of taking a leading part in public-spirited measures of utility, may be classed among the rewards of the successful and high-minded merchant.- These he realizes towards the close of his career in "large amounts." In all seasons of his life an attention to the precepts we have enforced, will ensure him that important element of happiness, ease of mind.

"Ease of mind," says an able writer, "is incomparably the most valuable of all possessions—not the ease of indolence, but of action—the smoothness of the unruffled current, not of the stagnant pool. This possession is not the gift of fortune: the gifts of fortune frequently destroy

it. It must be of our own acquiring, and is in a great measure within the reach of all who diligently seek after it. It does not depend upon the amount of our worldly possessions, but upon our mode of using them; not upon our ability to gratify our desires, but upon our regulation of them. It is essentially the result of our habits, which habits are entirely within our own control. To enjoy ease of mind, there must be a feeling that we are fulfilling our duties to the best of our power, otherwise we only sear instead of satisfying our conscience. The possession of riches, or the pursuit of them, beyond the limits of moderation, is unfavourable to this state, because temperance in the use of worldly enjoyments is absolutely necessary to it, and then comes the responsibility of the application of our superfluity.

In order to enjoy ease of mind in our intercourse with the world, we should introduce into our habits of business punctuality, decision, the practice of being beforehand, despatch, and exactness; in our pleasures, harmlessness and moderation; and in all our dealings, perfect integrity and love of truth. Without these observances we are never secure of ease, nor indeed taste it in its highest state. As in most other things, so here, people in general do not aim at

more than mediocrity of attainment, and of course usually fall below their standard; whilst many are so busy in running after what should procure them ease, that they totally overlook the thing itself.

Ease of mind has the most beneficial effects upon the body, and it is only during its existence that the complicated physical functions are performed with the accuracy and facility which nature designed. It is consequently a great preventive of disease, and one of the surest means of effecting a cure when disease has occurred; without it, in many cases, no cure can take place. By ease of mind many people have survived serious accidents, from which nothing else could have saved them, and in every instance recovery is much retarded by the absence of it. Its effect upon the appearance is no less remarkable. It prevents and repairs the ravages of time in a singular degree, and is the best preservative of strength and beauty. It often depends greatly upon health, but health always depends greatly upon it. The torments of a mind ill at ease seem to be less endurable than those of the body; for it scarcely ever happens that suicide is committed from bodily suffering. As far as the countenance is an index, "the vultures of the mind" appear to tear it more mercilessly than

any physical pain, and no doubt there have been many who would willingly have exchanged their mental agony for the most wretched existence that penury could produce. From remorse there is no escape. In aggravated cases probably, there is no instant, sleeping or waking, in which its influence is totally unfelt. Remorse is the extreme one way; the opposite is that cleanliness of mind, which has never been recommended any where to the same extent that it is by the precepts of the Christian religion, and which alone constitutes "perfect freedom." It would be curious if we could see what effects such purity would have upon the appearance and actions of a human being—a being who lived, as Pope expresses it, in 'the eternal sunshine of the spotless mind.'

The regularity and order attending the operations of a wise and skilful merchant, are admirably fitted for promoting this ease of mind, which is so essential an element of happiness.

---

It is matter of regret to us, that we cannot extend our present work to twice its intended size, in order to enumerate in greater detail, those rewards which by the successful exercise of his profession, the merchant may procure. We have already enumerated the more prominent. There

is still space left us to advert to one more, which presents itself to us, as by no means the least considerable; we mean the ability which his knowledge of the business and affairs of life confers on the merchant to benefit deserving persons, who may require his advice and assistance. The gratification which he thus obtains, is one of the richest of which a benevolent mind is capable. In order to illustrate this point, we will quote the story of

#### THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE MERCHANT.

Wisdom is the Science of Life. In the capital of an eastern kingdom lived many ages since Seid Ali, a man so devoted to science that he neglected every thing else. He had made many profound and important discoveries, of which others had availed themselves to obtain distinction and wealth—whilst he was passing the meridian of life, his patrimony spent in experiments, his health impaired by study, his temper soured by neglect. He had for a neighbour and acquaintance Ghulam Hassan, known throughout the city by the appellation of the Honest Merchant. Hassan had begun the world with very little education and no money, but in recompense, he had a straight-forward understanding, quick observation, a very agreeable frankness of

manner, and a heart without guile. Consequently he was universally courted, and though much given to hospitality and the performance of very generous acts, he had amassed a considerable fortune. To him in his extremity, Seid disclosed all his griefs. When he had finished—

“I have a few friends coming to sup with me this evening,” said Hassan; “be of the party, and when they are gone, we will talk of your affairs. In the mean time, take this purse for present exigencies. I will enable you soon to repay me. How it is to be done, I will endeavour to devise before we meet again. Only keep up your spirits, and all shall be well.”

Kind intentions need no preface. The moment the guests were gone, Hassan began thus:—

“You see, my friend, you have kept yourself so much in your study, that yours is the fame of a dead man. You have caused vast benefits to be derived to the world, but the world has scarcely seen you, and, of course, never thinks of rewarding your merits. To remedy your error, I have planned a frolic, if you are not too proud to play your part in it; but I have observed, almost every man must stoop to rise, and happy he who can do so without dishonour. You remember our going this time two years to my little country place, near that singularity amongst



us, the ancient aqueduct. I cannot tell you how much I was struck with your conjectures as to its origin, and your observations on its construction and materials. Now the old man who used to occupy my house and accompany visitors to the ruins, is lately dead, and what I propose is, that you should disguise yourself, and take his place. You know what an extensive acquaintance I have, and the terms upon which I live with them. I will take care to make parties to the aqueduct, and you in a homely garb shall be their guide. Every thing strikes by contrast, and a man of your attainments in such a situation cannot by possibility fail soon to attract sufficient notice to accomplish all you desire."

"I do not know—" said Seid, despondingly—

"I dare say you do not," interrupted Hassan, "but you know this, that with my little knowledge I have gained a fortune, and that with all yours you have lost one. In matters of science," continued he, bending low with unaffected homage, "I kiss the very ground you walk upon, but in practical matters you must put faith in me. Well-grounded faith, my friend, take the word of a successful man, has great virtue in other things besides religion. To-morrow I will arrange every thing—not another word—good night, and may Heaven give you your deserts!"

Experience shows, that those who have fallen into a wrong train, frequently meet with nothing but an unbroken series of adverse circumstances. Let them but change their course, and the exact reverse becomes the case ; every thing turns to account. Just so it was with Seid. Being duly installed in his new office, his altered way of life quickly produced so great a change in his appearance, health, and spirits, that he scarcely needed any further disguise ; and he felt, moreover, a degree of confidence in himself, of which previously he had no idea. Hassan made frequent parties on his account ; and his fame spread so fast, that a visit to the aqueduct soon came into great vogue. As good fortune would have it, the Vizier himself, who used from time to time to pass an evening with Hassan in the disguise of a brother merchant, sent at this conjuncture notice of his approach. He found in Hassan's company an agreeable relaxation from the cares of government, and the sophistications of the world ; besides which, he had looked in vain for any other man, upon whose information and integrity he could implicitly rely. Hassan availed himself of the opportunity to induce the Vizier to accompany him on an early day to his country place, and he informed Seid that he was bringing a friend, with whom he particularly wished him to

be well. The Vizier, though not scientific, delighted in the conversation of scientific men, and he had not long listened to Seid, before he remarked to Hassan, "It strikes me, this is a very extraordinary person. We are alone; is there any objection to his supping with us?"

"If it be your pleasure, none," said Hassan.

The scene around the house was lovely, the air cool and fragrant, the repast simple but refined, and without any state. The Vizier was in the best possible humour, and Seid, pleased with so acute and polished a hearer, rose above himself, till at last Hassan, suddenly bursting into a fit of laughter, cried out—

"Pardon me, but I can resist no longer."

Then rising up, he gravely added—

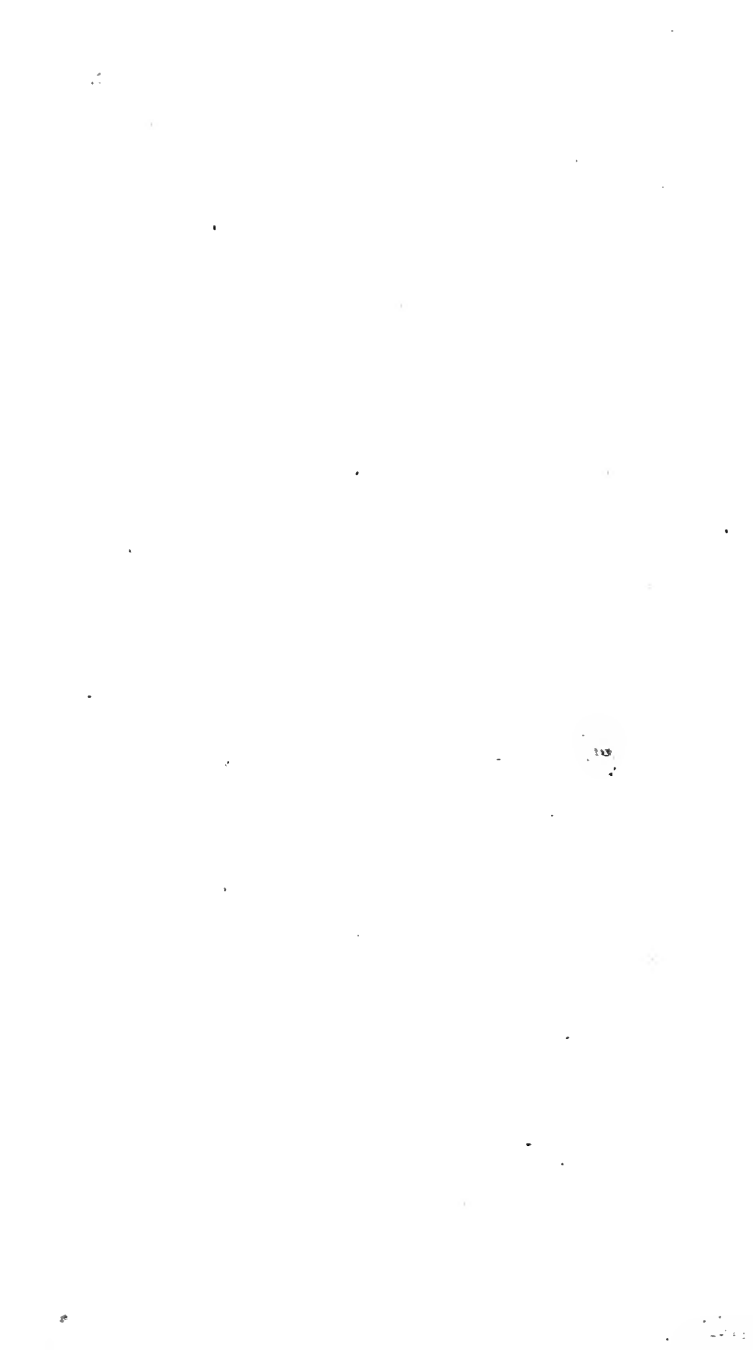
"I have extreme satisfaction in this opportunity of presenting to his highness the Vizier the philosopher Seid Ali." The surprise of the two was great, and the pleasure mutual. Hassan then related the history of the whole affair, and it will easily be supposed that from that time ample justice was done to the merits of his friend, and would have been done to his own, but his reply to the Vizier's intimation was, "Whatever your goodness intends for me, bestow on Seid. He deserves every thing, and I want nothing."

This, our last story, is not without its moral. It exhibits in a striking point of view the gratification which a truly benevolent mind derives from the performance of a liberal and disinterested action. Any one may fancy the pleasure which the merchant must have felt at the moment of introducing his distinguished friends to each other, and thus, in a manner, making the fortunes of both, at a single stroke. He had successfully applied his knowledge of men and things, of business and affairs, to the promotion of a noble and benevolent purpose, and had thus fairly earned one of the richest of the **MERCHANT'S REWARDS.**

**THE END.**

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or header, which is mostly illegible due to fading and bleed-through. Some words like "The" and "and" are faintly visible.

Small handwritten mark or signature at the bottom right of the page.



7

8

9

